

**Special Features This Issue**  
"Rowing Through Time in the Piscataqua Region"  
"Dispro... The Greatest Little Motorboat Afloat"



# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 22 - Number 14

December 1, 2004





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## On the Cover...

25 Dippys all in a lock on Canada's Trent Severn Waterway. Major feature in this issue about this unique Canadian motorboat.

## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



Many of you send us encouraging notes on your renewal forms, and we thank you for these. Together with the renewal rate running a consistent 75%-80%, these lead me to believe that what we are turning out meets with general approval. Those who do not find what they want on our pages simply don't renew, seldom do any offer comment on why they are not renewing. But occasionally someone will trouble to do so. A recent one offered as reason for not renewing, "too much Robb White!" That was a first. Since it was distinctly a minority view it will not affect the continued appearance of Robb's writing as long as he chooses to contribute.

Suggestions for things some readers would like to see more of, or less of, also come in with renewals, they are staying with us even if we are falling short in some area of meeting their interests. The major more/less preferences involve "how to" and "modest adventure" articles. There are those who are quite strongly focused on the boat building aspect of messing about in boats and do not regard with much enthusiasm tales of cruises from, as one put it, "East Cupcake to wherever."

It's been some time since this particular preference has been as forcibly expressed as one reader stated it years ago, "Messing about in boats IS about building, not all that other stuff." More typically, this preference is couched in a requesting manner like, it would be nice if we had more "how to" articles.

Well, I certainly do not object to publishing "how to" articles, although my preference is more towards "How I built my boat," rather than "How to build a boat." This is due to my interest in the human experiences involved in pursuing this messing about in boats game in all its aspects. All your many, many stories that make up the content of our pages bring to us your personal experiences to which we can relate. The "how to" aspect leaves the people part out in favor of the tech manual approach.

There are a lot of tech manuals out there for those who just want to focus on building (I include any sort of working on boats in the term "building"). A book that can detail all that needs to be presented in one compact volume is far more effective in leading those who wish to focus on building to where they want to go. The available space in a small magazine like ours just cannot do justice to what is required except, perhaps, when dealing with something like how to build a paddle or similar modest project.

Another facet of the "how to" article is that these are usually written by professionals in the fields they discuss, and these people

are earning a living at it and have to be paid. *WoodenBoat* usually has such articles serialized over several issues over several months, very complete, thorough, and the sort of thing that one can use if the boat being built happens to be one you want to build if you don't mind waiting until the series is completed.

"How to" articles about techniques applicable to a wide range of boats would be more manageable in a long term serial format, but again one must find someone knowledgeable willing to write them without expectation of payment. *WoodenBoat* has the resources to pay for such expert writing, we do not. It is seldom that someone comes along with an exhaustive series like the one we ran this past year on building *Sleeper*. Don Elliot asked if we'd publish his effort and we welcomed it.

So I come back to my preference for the people/project/adventure stories. These do not attempt to provide you with detailed information about building, but offer insights into what you might run into if and when you do undertake your own projects. For those of us who at times struggle with the job at hand it is reassuring to read how others have wrestled with similar obstacles.

There are those who will not begin a project until they feel completely assured that it will come out all right. They need to buy the appropriate book and thoroughly absorb it. I happen to be the sort who will launch a project (in any aspect of my life, including launching this magazine 22 years ago) based on a strong level of enthusiasm without necessarily having mastered all the details yet. I'll deal with them when I get to them.

And now about those "modest adventure" tales. I still find after all these years that each new one that comes along provides a vicarious experience that keeps the flame of enthusiasm for messing about in boats alive. I may never get to do many (if any) of these, but hope springs eternal and is sustained by tales from those who do. And as these tales are from readers who do not profess to be experienced world adventurers, again we can relate to their experiences as being something likely for us should we head forth on our own.

While I am impressed with, and enjoy reading about, the large scale adventures of the widely experienced who subsequently publish them for us all to enjoy, it's like money. I am impressed with how those with ample funds go about fulfilling their interests but I know I will never be able to operate at their level, so I focus on those more like myself and how they have achieved whatever their "modest adventures" may be.

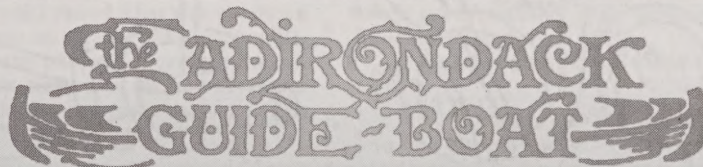


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Aug 6-8 Antique & Classic Boatshow Clayton NY  
Aug 6-8 Hildene Arts Fest, Manchester, VT  
Aug 13-15 Maine Boats & Harbors, Rockland ME  
Aug 20-22 Lake Placid Art Fest, Lake Placid NY  
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Sep 23-6 Norwalk Boat Show, Norwalk, CT  
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"Once you get into one of these boats you won't want to get out." Vogue

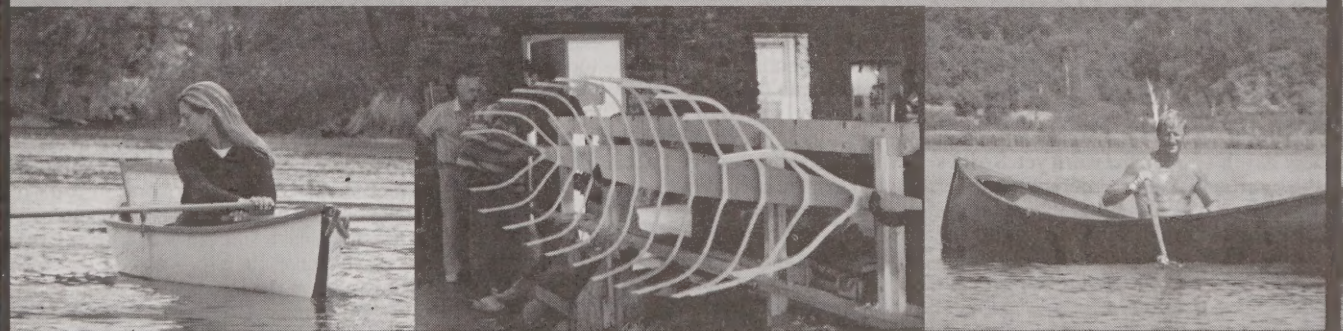
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# You write to us about...

## Information of Interest...

### Final Word on Trucker's Hitch?

In the January 1st issue, Hugh Groth describes a "Trucker's Hitch" as it is commonly tied. I used to do it the same way, until one day I was tying on a load at the Indian Brand Canoe plant in Maine when along came the head man, I forgot his name, and straightened me out.

I was going to pass along some advice on this knot but I'm a slow worker. I had some instructions ready and my diagrams worked out when along came the March 15th issue with Mr. Lund's "Rigger's Hitch." It looked a bit complicated but Ed Howard's "Leverage Sheepshank," on the same page, looks like a winner. Got to try it. Anyway, I freshened up my piece and resolved to start typing.

Then comes the June 1st issue with the definitive exposition. That ace rower, John Mullen, has a very good photo of the proper setup. Just above it our British friend, Denis Davis, offers a nice, clear, herpetologist's rendering of the same knot.

That should settle it, except that I have already invested all this work. Besides, this is a really important knot and a lot of folks

loop A. This second loop, B, becomes the dumb sheave for your 2-to-1 purchase.

Take the free end of the line around your second anchor, then through loop B, and back parallel to itself. Take a good strain on the free end. Sometimes there is enough slack and stretch in the system that loop B comes up against the second anchor, in which case unreeve the line from loop B and give it a good jerk. The hitch will come right out and can be reset further from the anchor.

Pinch loop B tightly and you can hold quite a good load while you fasten it with two half hitches, well snugged. You can hold a temporary load with one slipped half hitch but don't get under it or take it on the road.

I wonder if Mr. Groth has been converted yet.

Jim Thayer, Collbran, CO

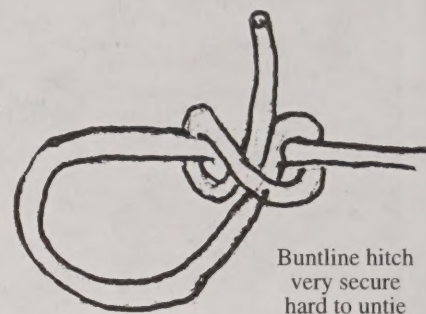
### Well, Not Quite...

Gene Bjerke corrects my nomenclature on the studding sail hitch and the buntline hitch in the July 1st *MAIB* "You write to us about..." He is correct and I have been calling it a studding sail hitch for years. Brion Toss has the studding sail halyard hitch on one page and the buntline hitch on the next and maybe that is where I got mixed up.

Now I am pulling myself along and swimming down to the end of the boom. The wide brimmed hat (skin cancers) is tied under my chin and the sunglasses are tied behind my head and I have on my life jacket because the Race Committee wants to make all of this as hard as possible. So I am 9' down looking through my sunglasses and thinking, studding sail hitch this time. Three dives and I got it done.

Next time I will be saying, "buntline hitch, you dummy."

Sam Chapin, Key West, FL



### Still More on Hitches and Tiedowns

Nice article on "Tying One On" by Mississippi Bob. Also enjoying the discussions about trucker's hitches. On trucker's hitches, I agree that you should use the tail to make the loop so the pull is balanced by the knot. I'd like to add that you can make the trucker's hitch better by taking two twists in the standing line before passing the tail through to make the loop. That ensures that the hitch will always be easy to untie no matter how strong the pull.

On tiedowns, the best hood tiedown is an eyebolt through a hole drilled in the center of the hood. Less everything, better pull. Blasphemy? Absolutely not, in the hierarchy of assisted motion boats outrank vehicles in all the important categories, effort, feel, imagination, literature, look, and salvation. Vehicles are subservient to boats, how often do you use a boat to pull a vehicle?

Andrew Jubal Smith, Tallahassee, FL

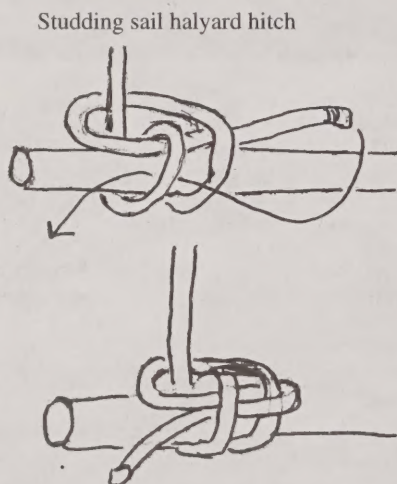
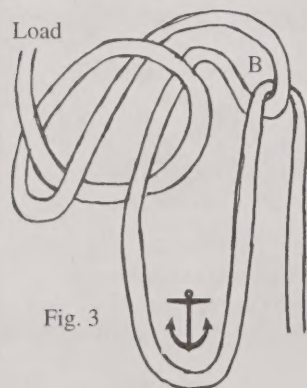
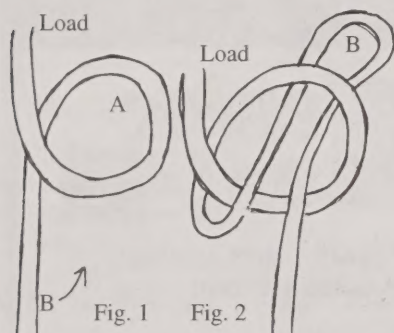
### More Trailer Light Stuff

The other day I noticed that my left turn signal was flashing much faster than usual. This puzzled me because a burned-out bulb, the most likely reason, should, according to my theory, result in a slower rate. The theory went, a burned-out bulb results in less current draw, thus slower heating of the bimetallic strip and more time to break contact?

Not long after I was visiting with Mr. Thomas Gale of Logan, Utah, a storied Kokonaut, but moreover, a foreign car guru. He opined that it was a dead bulb and noted that on French cars it was on the opposite from the fast blink. A check in the bright sun showed that the tails were okay but was inconclusive regarding the front.

This morn at 6:30, still dark (October), I ventured out to complete my investigation for this report. Being a clever fellow and a tech nut as well, I just stood in front of the Dakota and clicked the unlock button. Three hot bulbs each side! Inside, working the turn signals, gave me two bulbs on the right but only one on the left.

One must modify we's theory to fit the facts. Maybe the strip heats more slowly but



Just last week, before our local Laser races with about 15-18mph of wind, I was sailing my boat and had checked the wind direction several times, checked the current, practiced my tacks and gybes, and was just luffing along waiting for the course to get set up, then the two half hitches that were in the outhaul shook out. There was too much wind to just grab the end of the boom and tie it up again, so I capsized the boat.

It is an old boat and I have been tempted to name it the "Century Club" because if you add my age to the boat's age it comes to over 100. So being an old boat, the aluminum boom has a number of holes drilled in it to repair or replace fittings and it promptly filled with water and pointed straight down. The topmast section is watertight and kept the mast almost at the water's surface.

probably haven't gotten the word yet. So let's give the moribund nag one more whack.

One piece of line, preferably braid, is used. Anchor it with a bowline at one end and pass it over whatever you wish to put a strain on. Somewhere within easy reach of your second anchor point, form a loop, A in Fig. 1. Grab the line at B and poke R down through



doesn't pop away as far and thus snaps back much faster. I also remarked that this is the first time I remember encountering this phenomenon in my 60 years alert behind the wheel. Well, we haven't had electric turn signals that long. I remember my '41 Plymouth had an aftermarket stalk strapped to the steering column with a rubber wheel that ran against the underside of the steering wheel for self-canceling. Maybe we have some new electronic marvel in place of the old strip.

Well, can you divine the point of all this? When I hooked up my trailer, the flasher rate returned to normal. EUREKA! Here we have a simple way to tell if the trailer lights are working. Just get a tow outfit with redundant bulbs and take one out. Some clever fellow could, no doubt, come up with an electronic gizmo to produce a signal based on this concept. Check with me about royalties.

While I have your attention, maybe you can help me with another problem. I have a Chevy Tracker. It's a good little outfit but the collision insurance is high because it is really a Suzuki and the parts are pricey. I ordered a trailer hitch at the local farm supply store for \$120. It went right on with the supplied bolts screwing into pre-threaded holes in the frame. Piece of cake! But nothing is that easy. When I went looking for wires, everything I needed was in the left tail light except, of course, the right turn. There was a large bundle of wires headed for the right side but none of them matched the right turn wire. Sure, I could just run a wire across the car, but that's not an elegant solution.

I tied myself down to Ed Bosarth, the purveyor of Chevies in this burg, and accosted the service manager. I have severely limited my interactions with service managers over the years, and in that limited number have only encountered one who knew anything about automobiles, he a Volvo man.

This gent couldn't pull a man off the job to talk to me, didn't have a book rate for the job, but guessed that it would run 60-80 bucks. Detecting, perhaps, that I was less than pleased (I had bought the machine there using \$3,000 of credit card earnings), he summoned a mechanic who didn't know anything either, but who ran me off a couple of pages of wiring diagrams.

The diagrams show what looks to me like a symbol for a plug and it's labeled "to trailer." Could there be a socket hidden somewhere? Guess I'll tackle the parts desk and see if there is a trailer harness listed. Probably cost 50 clams, but I might learn something.

## Information Wanted...

### Ned McIntos Designs

I am interested in obtaining information/plans of Ned McIntos' Marry Mac 13'6", Mini Mac 7'6", and his 8'9" canvas dinghy. I also would like to obtain a photocopy of Percy Blandford's Puffin folding kayak design and information on availability of his various books.

I just read about Mr. McIntos in an old November/December 1997 issue of *Wooden Boat*, good basic simple designs.

Herbert Diaz, C-86543, P.O. Box 689-Y-228, Soledad, CA 93460-0689



Here, battleships Atlantic Fleet anchor off the New England coast during maneuvers in August 1906.

### That Was the Navy

Speculation about that photo showing possible naval vessels at anchor beyond the Rockport, Massachusetts, breakwater on Bunny Fernald's period postcard on the "You Write..." pages of the October 15th issue seems to be borne out as this photo from *The American Steel Navy*, by John D. Alden\* (wonderful book) shows what was out there. Sandy Bay was an official naval anchorage. The view in the photo is looking northeast from Bearskin Neck over the old harbor of Rockport. Maybe someone can name the stone sloop ghosting by.

### Folding Schooner Full Length Keel

Re: the Bolger Folding Schooner in Australia article in the October 1st issue and his recommendation to add depth to a full length keel, acknowledging that it is not an efficient solution...would it be possible to have him comment on this notion? Since plated rudders work, and since finned keels work, wouldn't there be an advantage to adding multiple (two or three) short, shallow, inverted T parallel keels to increase lateral plane? It seems to me that these would work well in thin water, taking the ground better, and not hindering agility.

Irwin Schuster, Tampa, FL

## Opinions...

### About That Photo ID at Mystic

I was amazed reading your commentary in the October 1st issue (Vol. 22, No. 10), thinking you were writing about me! But as I thought about it, the timing was wrong. You see, I was a member of Mystic Seaport Museum for many, many years and even did some volunteer work there. I had little chance to use my membership as my career left little free time.

Sometime in the 1920s (I think) *American Bay* magazine published a fictional story of a fleet maneuver in which a Gloucester lobsterman doing naval reserve duty took a torpedo boat through Straitsmouth Gut and "torpedoed" one of the battleships of the opposing fleet anchored on the bay and not watching the gut. That would have been a much later battleship than these, the white hulls turned to gray in 1909.

\*No relation as far as I know to the designer.

Phil Bolger, Gloucester, MA

On one Sunday afternoon about four or five years ago I thought I might go to the museum and spend a few hours looking around. The girl at the gate would not accept my membership card without a photo ID. I was so mad I did not even enjoy my visit and left after a short time, never to return. When my membership renewal came in the mail, I penned a short note telling them why I was not renewing. The Director of Membership phoned me two or three times over the next year to renew, but I did not. She was very nice, but never once did she admit that the gate policy was upsetting members.

After some years contemplating this, I don't think they are trying to catch someone with a borrowed card. I think they are deliberately trying to intimidate the membership so that they will not consider lending their cards out.

Kent Lacey, Old Lyme, CT



The summer of 1954 is one that remains tucked away in a back room of my adult brain; it can be summoned to the here and now by a scent or the way the light hits the wrack line as I walk the beach a half century later. Perhaps all true messengers about have these memories lying dormant, ready to spring forth as we stroll along a shoreline or rock gently on the waves. It may be what separates us from the others of our species; that part which is formed in our childhood, directing us toward a lifetime of finding ways to be on or near water.

I was the most fortunate of children, born to a family that made no distinction as to which were "proper" roles for boys or girls. Having no sons, my parents treated both my older sister and me as equals to any of their nephews when it came to education and interesting hobbies. We lived about 12 miles inland in the multi-generational family homestead, surrounded by fresh water in the form of river tributaries, mill ponds, and kettle holes tucked into the granite bones of northeastern New England.

From the earliest memories I was constantly playing with water. If the parents took a hike and rested by the brook, I was soon up to my knees or floating stick rafts down a snow melt swollen rivulet. Mother was quick to point out the local flora and fauna we could admire but not disturb. Dad relaxed and just enjoyed the rest stop. I was the youngest and certainly the loudest member of the local birding group that tromped over the still undeveloped acres surrounding our village center. There being a vast five years difference in ages, I can't recall too many outings with my sister attending; she was more likely out with her peers while I learned the habits of the real river (musk)rat and about the toads and moles that were common sights.

It was when we piled into the old beach wagon with one set of cousins or the other that my father began to show interest in the nature around us. Heading to Crane's Beach on an early weekend morning was a ritual that we all looked forward to. Dad was the master fire builder and lugged the big red cooler with crinkly aluminum top filled with breakfast items his sister or sister-in-law had fixed and I carried the blue and green plaid horse blanket we'd use for our sand-free eating area. Mom was a night shift nurse and rarely got time off to join us.

As the adults set up and got the fire prepared to cook bacon and pancakes later, I was off like a kite with a broken string. Cousins might be content to build sand castles; I was determined to find the best flotsam to drag home to share with my naturalist mother. When she could join us, I was tugging at her hand to go explore the wrack line or to clamper up the rocks at the far end. Dad would point out the modern art like designs the beach grass made on the sand as it swung gentle arches in the wind; Mom would tell me about the intricate root systems needed to hold the dunes in place and warn us about running through the razor sharp clumps barefooted.

I spent part of every weekend from late April until late October wandering the beach I view today from my front window. Often in the middle of winter, Dad would take me to ramble along each as he sorted out complex engineering problems for a difficult job. Even in the winter, perhaps more so than summer, I felt at home on the beach.



## Window on the Water

By Chris Kaiser

### The (Hurricane) Eyes Have IT!

It was the summer of 1954 that I was given the greatest gift of my life to that time. We were to go live at the ocean for the WHOLE summer! I'm not sure how my 12-year-old sister felt being hauled away from her best friend, but I was beside myself with anticipation for the last week of school. I hoarded paper and pencils a sympathetic teacher had given me to do a project to present the first day of school when we returned. We rented a fishing shack across the dirt road from the harbor. My cousins were renting a larger house up behind us and we knew several of the older children in residence. Mom had the summer off; she was a nurse at Phillips Andover Preparatory School and was not required to work summers. Dad was to commute each Friday evening to spend the weekend with us, bringing our grandmother to stay with her daughter in the house behind us. Barbi had an antique shop and couldn't leave it all summer.

Dad's daily trek to Boston was long enough not to have to double it from Cape Ann and the primitive accommodations would have ruined his suits. The shack was in fact just that, a tar-papered, narrow building, 10' wide by 32' long, housing a rusty gas stove and a rudimentary sink with a few open shelves for the kitchen. The tiny tin shower stall, crammed next to an ancient toilet comprised the bathroom, teeth were brushed in the kitchen, and Dad shaved as best he could under the low eaves, or on nice days went outside to shave. We most often just hosed down under the apple tree after a day in the salt water.

Duke, the ancient (to my young eyes) lobster man who owned the shack, moved next door each summer, renting out his spartan winter quarters for the welcome supplemental income it provided. Duke's summer house was smaller and more sparse than the one we occupied. He enjoyed sitting under the gnarly apple tree, telling stories to the local children of his years as a commercial fisherman out of Gloucester. His career was ended when a heavy hatch slammed shut, trapping him by his arm which was later amputated at the elbow. He was born to fish, he said, and after a few years of trying to work

in the processing plant, he retired to his little houses and took up lobstering in the summer. He taught all the local boys and the ones who came for the summer to pull pots and make wooden traps.

As a small female I was under the radar of the big boys and would sit quietly in the shadows listening to Duke's tall tales of adventure. Herman Melville had nothing on Duke as a story teller. In fact, Duke had a lot more humor, not to mention brevity! I suspect my sister was roped into babysitting for my aunt or others with small children as I have no memories of her spending much time with me. She'd been told to watch after us if we wanted to go up on top of the sea wall. I was the second eldest of the children and could usually find a way to avoid the crush and chaos of the younger ones by leaving a note for my mother as to where I was going to be and leaving before anyone was awake.

As the summer advanced I won my way into Duke's notice and cheerfully ran errands for him between his little house and the granite slabbed beach out front where he hauled his dory out to make a repair. Sometimes, with my mother's permission I'd sit quietly in the boat and dip up small squid as he somehow attracted them in a school around the dory in the evening. Preparing lobster bait, he'd cut the cod racks up with a wicked looking cleaver and toss it all into a big enameled basin. The boys were not too thrilled about stuffing the bait sacks, but they'd have to do it to earn rides out to pull pots with him. I was excluded from this because I was a girl, and girls didn't haul traps.

After being left behind for several weeks, I convinced a neighbor's son to let me be part of his team. I ended up stuffing the less than fresh bait into coarse hemp net sacks and then had to suffer the indignity of having to ask the boy's father to join us, as I wasn't strong enough to actually haul a trap. Duke had two boats, one with a smelly old motor and another with just a sculling oar. It was the sculling oar version he'd take out alone when he wasn't suffering the company of young boys and pesky little girls. Watching from the center of the seawall, I could see him standing with the long scull tucked up into his armpit, bending and swaying as he maneuvered along so he could haul the pots with his good arm. He'd also use this lighter boat for harvesting the squid, some of which he sold to the non-fishing Italian family around the corner. The rest was used to bait his pots.

When I wasn't hounding the old fisherman, I'd be playing mermaid and Selkie with my younger cousins. They all wanted to be the mermaids, I was always the Scottish Selkie. When it was an aunt's duty to watch our swimming lessons, I'd get in trouble for diving and staying under the surface too long, scaring her and teasing the others with pinches on their toes as they practiced treading water. We'd all been to see the 30-lb. blue lobster someone had caught and taken to the UMass biology station over in the next cove. I delighted in being able to convince the younger cousins that its mate was crawling around the bottom of the cove looking to get revenge on unwary humans. Each having been smartly pinched by the big green crabs that we corralled to play with in the tide pools, they knew that a 30-lb. lobster would likely break a toe or drag them down to the bottom.



I admit it was mean, but it was highly entertaining to see them react.

Mother was more often the overseer at the shore front so I was unable to get away with much. She could float on her back for hours and keep her head angled so she could see me if I tried any foolishness. When not watching other children, she'd lead Karen and me on field trips across the boulders left from coastal quarrying, and she'd show us the secrets hidden under rock weed and in the center of a tangle of Irish moss. We even had a

custard made from Irish moss we'd collected ourselves.

Finding a protected spot, we'd hunker down and watch a weather front come in from the ocean. The leading edge of most storms were heralded by the gulls and ducks being pressed in front of the rising winds. In an unmistakable, "Do as I say, not as I do" moment. Mother would often stand at the top of the seawall as the wind whipped her hair and tore our worried shouts to her away, as she stole a moment of peace from the enforced

togetherness that summer "vacation" had become.

I learned my birds and wildflowers at my mother's knee, learned the quiet solitude of the winter beach from my father, but deep down within me is a love and affinity for the shore that has bred true throughout the generations, reaching me from the ancient Scots, Swedes, and Irish seafarers.

**(To be continued, in which the writer meets Carol, Dolly, and Edna)**

I guess I must be some kind of a nut but I sort of miss all the fights I had trying to get that damned Murphy out of my boat. The only time I had the engine room box off of there last spring was to install the only gauge I have in the boat. I don't believe in gauges and idiot lights. What the hell was that foolishness when they put the hood over the radiator of the car so you couldn't see the steam coming out of the radiator cap? Anyway, the radiator cap (keel cooler day tank) of the Rescue Minor is under the engine box so I can't see it, but the vent hose from the coolant expansion tank vents out a little fitting right by my foot. I believe if it runs hot I'll know without having to take my attention off what I am trying to do to peer myopically at some fool gauge which may be lying through its teeth like the temperature gauge of my Mercedes.

You know, it seems that the highly touted German engineers could figure out how to make a temperature gauge with only one moving part work as well as a 59 cent Chinese digital watch, don't it? They ought to be able to figure out how to keep all that black oil inside a diesel engine, too, but that has nothing to do with this because this is about solutions to problems that can actually be solved.

You know, ever since I was a little boy, people have been suspicious of things that I say I did. The reason is simply that I do a lot of things, and most people don't, so accomplishments of most any kind seem incredible to them. I understand that now, but back during my formative years I developed something of a paranoia about making sure that I had proof of any claim I made and went overboard with documentation. I still keep a notebook with accurate entries of all my doings for every single day.

Sam and I have completely revised the plans and instructions for the Grumman Sport Boat Improvement Project. It isn't that the plans were wrong or the instructions incomplete, it was just that when we planked up the second (actually the third, counting the one made in the high school shop class up in Tennessee) hull following the plans exactly, we saw some things that could be improved (improvements to an improvement). About the only thing we did to the plans was to separate the mold tracings so they were no longer all wadded up like in the body plan of a real set of plans and could be picked out one at a time easier, and the only thing I did to the instructions was to add a few opinions that I thought would be helpful.

That fooling around trying to fix something that ain't broke is just a sign of me going overboard to make sure that nothing I do or say is not absolutely accurate. That's why I put the gauge in the Rescue Minor, too. I

## Solutions

By Robb White

have made some suppositions about the gas mileage of the boat that I am not absolutely certain about. I did it by running it a certain distance in two directions to, hopefully, eliminate the effects of the tidal currents (pretty strong in this bay) and measuring how much fuel it took to fill it back up again. I did it a couple of times over about 16 miles but you know, gas mileage of a boat is pretty hard to measure accurately unless you make a long trip so the variables actually do average out.

The new gauge is an hour meter. I figure that since I always run the same speed (10.5 knots measured on the GPS in known slack water), I can pretty much tell how far I have been regardless of the conditions if I can keep up with the hours on the engine. I figure I'll measure all the fuel I burn and keep a running log (in my notebook) for a long time. I know that idling up the river will run up the hours but I think the fact that the boat is running at a less efficient speed will make it sort of equal...besides, it is only about two-tenths of an hour to the trip and this trip has racked up six hours so far. Besides, I got the damned gauge cheap at a junk store because it was old style mechanical instead of impossible to read in the daytime liquid crystal...made in the U.S. back in the good old days when it was common for Americans to make things. It works fine, too...makes a loud click every tenth of an hour. Maybe Murphy won't notice it.

Which, I think the reason the boat has been doing so well is that he climbed out the tailpipe and down onto the stern roller of the trailer and has begun to infect it instead. The first thing that went wrong was the wretched bulb style taillights and I had to convert to those LED style (which are still working). Then that rough road from Chiefland to Cedar Key gripped his ass so bad that he fatigued the springs on the trailer and made them cock the toggle link straight out so there was no effective spring action at all. I had to get out and uncock the link with my tire iron about every 20 miles on the trip back or might have broken a spring. When I got back, I added another leaf to the springs but I am scared they might be fatigued so I believe I will replace them with new ones and, maybe, try to fit some shock absorbers back there...that would be the solution.

Then, when he had done his worst to the trailer (unlatched the hitch for one other thing...you know it'll ride for 100 miles unlatched without bouncing off the ball) the old

sombitch climbed up under the car and grabbed hold of the hydraulic hose that connects the pump on the engine to the steel tubing that goes all the way back and works the hydraulic self leveling system (works well... good German engineering for a change...a hell of a lot better than that cheap made little air compressor on Ford and GM cars) and he bent it back and forth so many times that the old 23-year-old rubber fatigued and let the hydraulic oil dribble out and lubricate all the belts so that the power steering and the air conditioner and the alternator stopped working. We managed to limp on back, though. Then the bastard infested the air conditioner evaporator core. Jesus, what a mess. The whole dashboard had to come out. I wonder where he is now?

I don't know if Murphy has any control over nature or not, but we were down at the harbor trying to catch some of the mullet that were thick as fleas in there by drifting (hour meter switched off) across with me standing in the front of the boat throwing the net at suspicious swirls in the dark water. We didn't catch any mullet but I did catch a cursed hard-head catfish (inedible, in my opinion) and he tied the net in such a knot with his spines that I could barely see him. That's a mess. I carefully reached down in all that monofilament and broke off his spines one by one with my fingers (pliers will mess up and mash the meshes...is there a special name for a combination of words like that?) but, damned if when I finally bent the next to last one enough to break it, my hand didn't slip and stick the last spine into my thumb. There is a poison to those things that will instantly make you feel about too sick to function but if you can immerse the part that got stuck in some hot water, it'll stop hurting and you can avoid the certain horrible swelling and agony that lasts at least 24 hours.

"Where we going to get some hot water real quick?" I wailed to Jane as the black blood of a deep puncture wound dripped off my thumb. "Stick it in the radiator hole," was her advice and it worked marvelously. I think it is completely well this morning. Maybe Dave Carnell's advice about the curative powers of antifreeze (will cure any fungus infection...even chronic athlete's foot) holds true for poisonous puncture wounds. I believe the heat method will work for any protein based poison and I know it works for bee stings, ant bites, tick bites...any reaction to the injections of any parasite except for redbugs (chiggers) who live in a little hole way down in your skin. Their injection is their own feces which is not denatured by heat. I don't know if heat treatment is the solution for rattlesnake bites and hope I never have to find out...but I might.



Long before the Native Americans ever settled in the Piscataqua River Basin 11,000 years ago, this pristine river with its numerous tributaries, bays, and islands, swirling with cross-grained and wily waters, tricky currents and quirky tides, flowed unimpeded to the Atlantic Ocean. Its water pure and full of fish, the river's green forested shores teemed with wildlife, a New World Garden of Eden.

Since the coming of civilization numerous artists, writers, poets, and visitors have extolled its beauty as a special, if not a blessed place. "The Piscataqua, beautiful water," reads an 1876 *Portsmouth Journal* travelogue article, "is the prince of rivers." This area of 120 square miles favors agriculture, fishing, shipbuilding, industry, trade, lumbering, national defense bases, outdoor recreation, tourism, and indeed, pleasant living.

In *Cross Grained & Wily Waters: A Guide to the Piscataqua Maritime Region*, editor W. Jeffery Bolster, a major contributor himself, has garnered essays from recognized experts in various fields, many with a lifetime of familiarity with their subjects. With accompanying photographs, graphs, maps, and even cartoons, Bolster has thoroughly explored this watery boundary between present day New Hampshire and Maine. Totalling 85 essays by 44 writers, each article is appended with a concise bibliography and a brief author biography. In a number of cases, some pieces are the distillation of whole books. Ample images portray the interplay of land and water, some as color plates.

The fold-out, multi-colored map, worthy of framing, is a gem, corrected and updated until time of publication. Its cartography provides a clear depiction of roads, railroads, boat launch sites, historic houses, and beaches, in short the 21st century transformation of the once virgin Piscataqua area, which the Native Americans originally described (among variants) as "a divided tidal place."

Many contributors have based their research and interpretations derived from manuscripts, newspapers, and books in fostering an historical approach to the enrichment of the book. Some individuals were actual participants or otherwise interviewed in the events they describe. Dudley Dudley, a Durham legislator, was instrumental in the defeat of the proposed Onassis oil terminal and refinery. With his hands-on experience as captain aboard the gundalow replica, *Captain Edward H. Adams*, Mike Gowell writes on that topic, as well as on his friendship with boatbuilder Bud MacIntosh. A corruption of the Italian "gondola" the gundalow was a flat bottomed barge carrier ideally suited to take advantage of Piscataqua's strong tides. Valerie Cunningham interviewed African Americans who vacationed in the seacoast area.

From "A" (Adams Point and Atheneum) to "Y" (York River), this volume, indeed, covers the waterfront. The essays on lobstering, clamming, fishing, and shipping testify that the Piscataqua is still a working port, not just a stuffy museum abounding with historic houses or a gushy boutique and bed and breakfast tourist area. If viewed today from the top of Mount Agamenticus, or more likely from a plane over Pease International Airport, the scene below bustles as a vital, strategic, commercial entrepot of trade, transportation, and manufacturing.



## Book Review

### *Cross Grained & Wily Waters* *A Guide to the Piscataqua Maritime Region*

W. Jeffery Bolster, Editor  
Peter E. Randall, Publisher  
Portsmouth, NH, 2002  
ISBN 0-914339-65-6

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214 pages, maps, photographs,  
fold-out maps

Reviewed by Richard E. Winslow III  
Portsmouth Marine Society

In his introduction Bolster stresses the economic factor as the prime motivation for 1600 English companies to explore and colonize this area. "The Piscataqua was envisioned at best as a source of commodities for profit," Bolster states. "They (investors, fisherman, loggers, and farmers) felt deeply that they were doing God's work." As Piscataqua's first explorer/entrepreneur, Martin Pring, an English sea captain, sailed up the Piscataqua in 1603. The region was thus settled not for the scenery, not for saving Native American souls, but for quick profit. This phenomenon was nothing new in the New World. A century earlier Spanish conquistadors felt obsessed to advance their country's and their own best interests "for God, for Gold, and for Glory."

After Pring's initial venture, shrewd Yankee capitalists, over the next four centuries, employed the same zest for harvesting its vast resources; the forests for masts, the tributaries for waterpower, the blue clay for bricks, and the beaches for tourism. To defend this important area as well as the country at large, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, established in the 1800s, has designed, built, and repaired vessels during the evolution of naval construction. "From Sails to Atoms" is the Yard's motto. Forts and lighthouses ring the harbor for defense and safety. All these initiatives are duly described in this book.

In recent times the tide has been somewhat reversed, from four centuries of ravaging the area to the modern day enactment and enforcement of strict environmental laws coupled with the establishment of nature preserves. Each with its own entry, the Ordione Point Seacoast Science Center, the Sandy Point Discovery Center, and the Rachel

Carson National Wildlife Refuge, among others, seek to redress the wasteful record of the past and to educate the general public and school groups through displays, lectures, and tours. As one of the main themes in this book, its proponents seek to restore the delicate ecological balance. When that day arrives, the unpolluted Piscataqua will be sufficiently clean to entice the once prevalent salmon to migrate upstream.

This book describes and analyzes many historical events and personalities, the American Revolution, historic houses, Strawberry Banke, lighthouses, neighborhoods, and literary figures. Among the well-known Piscataqua individuals discussed or quoted are naval hero John Paul Jones, author Thomas Bailey Aldrich, poet Celia Thaxter, novelist Sarah Orne Jewett, gundalowman Edward H. Adams, and shipbuilder David C. "Bud" MacIntosh. While these local personalities may not evoke the same mythical folk hero recognition as such nationally known legends as Johnny Appleseed, Paul Bunyan, John Henry, Casey Jones, or Joe Magarac, the exploits, accomplishments, and stories associated with these regional individuals are still current on the local scene.

This book's identification with the Piscataqua economy in a maritime setting has not been lost on earlier and contemporary civic leaders. One just has to glance at the state, city, or town official seal to grasp the spell of the river. Both the State of New Hampshire seal and its flag are graced with the locally built warship *Raleigh*. The City of Portsmouth seal depicts a ship on the stocks, the Durham town seal offers a gundalow, and the Eliot, Maine seal honors the clipper *Nightingale*. In a like manner Exeter pictures a fish and Dover a ship, a locomotive, and mill.

As a historian, I offer one suggestion and point out typographical errors and factual slips in anticipation of a more accurate updated edition. An index for easy reference would be most helpful. Thanks to meticulous proofreading, slips are mercifully few. I list three. On page 49, the place name is Adams (not Adam's) Point. On page 173, the lake in northern Maine is spelled Munsungan, not Munsungen. On a personal note, I might mention that while paddling a canoe on that lake with Norway Bluff on the north shore, my guide mentioned that Native American artifacts carved from that mountain's volcanic rock have been found by archeologists even beyond in the Piscataqua region, as noted in the book, but as far south as New Jersey. On page 183, shipbuilder Samuel Hanscom, Jr. was the uncle, not the brother, of Isaiah Hanscom, designer of the famous clipper *Nightingale*. Furthermore, there is no evidence that singer Jenny Lind, the "Swedish Nightingale," for whom the vessel was named, ever appeared in Eliot, Maine, or even locally.

With the book's emphasis heavily tilted toward the save the environment ethic, I would have included as a foil in the spirit of fair play and proper balance a sketch or two (Portsmouth tycoon Frank Jones would be a perfect example) of those who perceived the Piscataqua in a radically different perspective. During the Gilded Age, Jones and other industrialists used pick, shovel, and dynamite to alter the land into factories, railroads, wharves, hotels, smokestacks, and dams,



along with their own spacious homes, show-place farms, and custom-made yachts. Judged as environmentally incorrect by today's standards these 19th and early 20th century businessmen, whether viewed either as robber barons or as captains of industry, are, nevertheless, part of the Piscataqua story.

These reservations aside, *Cross Grained & Wily Waters* is a landmark and visually beautiful book, illuminating its topic like the Fort Point, Whaleback, or White Island light-houses. Designed for serious study or casual reading, this volume belongs in every New Hampshire and Maine public school or college library.

As a final note, I embrace Sarah Orne Jewett's apt description of the Piscataqua, quoted in the book, as a "noble and dignified stream." There is no doubt that this region is threatened today by many perils, all addressed directly or by inference in these pages as well as in today's newspaper articles and editorials. Among others, these concerns are; glut of traffic on highways and bridges, runaway real estate prices, teardown of historic buildings, over development of condos and luxurious ocean front homes, depleted fishing grounds, speedboats and jet skis racing at full

throttle on ocean and inland waters, or, simply put, too much growth in general. Coupled with these issues are rumors, hopefully false, that the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, with its 4,500 employees the largest labor force in the area, may be slated for closure. After all, it stands to reason that the Piscataqua region still has to make a living "out of season" once the fall leaf peepers leave for the winter and these welcome visitors are no longer pouring millions of dollars into the local economy.

This book fully recognizes this dichotomy, growth versus preservation. "Savoring the Piscataqua's historical inheritance and preserving its natural environments," concludes Bolster in the book's last sentence, "is one way to keep the soul of this special place intact, thereby nourishing ourselves and future generations." Bolster's assessment is valid, responsible citizens and politicians can and must arrive at intelligent decisions to save what is left.

As *Cross Grained & Wily Waters* so beautifully captures it, the Piscataqua River, along with its environs, continues to roll down majestically from its highlands to the Atlantic, still the "prince of rivers." In spite of everything, and with allowances for a few eye-

sores in the lower industrial section of the river, factories, power plants, piers, salt and iron scrap piles, this "noble and dignified stream," for the most part, spreads out today as lovely and picturesque as Martin Pring first gazed upon it 400 years ago.

(Portsmouth historian Dick Winslow is also an avid wilderness canoeing enthusiast and periodically graces our pages with his reports on his adventures afloat on great north woods streams. His next will appear in the January 1st issue.)

### Want a Copy of Your Own?

*Cross Grained & Wily Waters* may be ordered through the Gundalow Company. Proceeds of such sales benefit the education programs and operation of the Gundalow *Edward H Adams*. Please send check for \$28 plus \$5 shipping to the Gundalow Company, P.O. Box 425, Portsmouth, NH 03802. Thank you.



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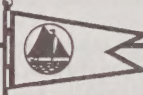
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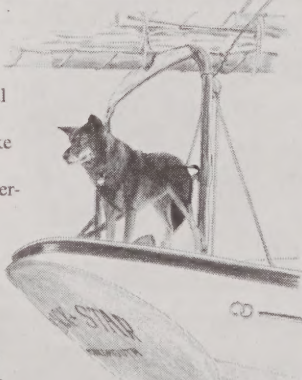
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Check the tidal current table and launch your kayak or favorite rowing boat at one of the many public launching ramps along the serpentine Piscataqua estuary of coastal New Hampshire. No matter where you put in, you will find majestic expanses of open water or at least one of the seven shallow, winding rivers that flow into the Great Bay and Little Bay, as well as stretches of undeveloped shoreline, an array of birds and fish, and the palpable presence of the past. Some of the oldest towns in America - Dover, Durham, Exeter, Stratham, Newington, Newmarket, in New Hampshire, and South Berwick in Maine - are connected by these rivers. And if you are lucky, you might catch a glimpse of the only remaining Piscataqua Gundalow.

Gundalows were the "tidal trucks" of the Piscataqua region. Unique to the area, they were the old timers' solution to the problem of moving cargo through an estuary system with some of the strongest tidal currents in America. In response to a growing need in the 1700s for a barge that could take advantage of the tidal currents while transporting bulk cargo between Portsmouth (a deep water port) and the towns on the shallow rivers upstream, locals began building "gundalows" in the late 1600s.

Gundalows were flat bottomed with the expectation of spending time on the mudflats in between trips. Steering, in conjunction with the tidal currents, was accomplished with a rudder, a single leeboard, and a pair of sweeps or large oars. The lateen rig was added much later, the sail was hung on a single spar and set on a short stump mast which made it relatively easy to raise and lower the rig quickly as more bridges were built around the bay.

Until their decline at the turn of the 20th century, there were dozens of gundalows operating on the rivers daily, carrying a variety of cargo such as saltmarsh hay, lumber, mud, and cordwood for the brickyards, raw materials and finished goods for the mills. Anyone traveling near the Great Bay 100 or more years ago would have expected to see several gundalows underway, a reminder of the importance of maintaining the vital connection between Portsmouth and the nearby towns. Today we hardly give thought to the



## "Rowing Through Time in the Piscataqua Region"

By Molly Bolster

fact that South Berwick is connected by water to Exeter, or that if you get in your wherry in Durham you could row to Newington in a couple of hours. But not so long ago the waterways here were the major arteries of a regional transportation system.

Motivated by a belief that the Piscataqua has a unique maritime heritage worth preserving and that the gundalow represents the best of the past, present, and future of this region, an inspired group of devotees got together in the late 1970s to build a replica. At the time there were no gundalows left, the number of people still alive with a direct connection to historic gundalows was dwindling fast. Using the lines from the *Fannie M.*, the last commercially operating gundalow on the Bay, a dedicated group spent two years building a gundalow on the grounds of Strawberry Banke

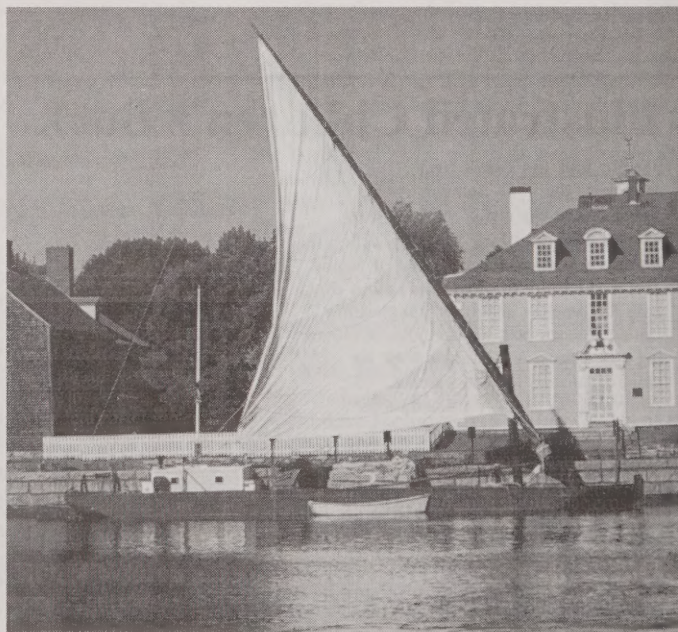
Museum in Portsmouth. Legendary boat-builder Bud McIntosh, from Dover, guided the project. In 1982 a team of oxen hauled the *Captain Edward Adams* to the shore where she was launched with great fanfare.

For the next 20 years the replica gundalow, named for Captain Edward Adams (the owner and Captain of the *Fannie M.*), traveled seasonally up and down the rivers from town to town. School groups and the public were welcomed onboard for tours and left with a better appreciation for the maritime heritage of the region and for the environmental sensitivity of the estuary.

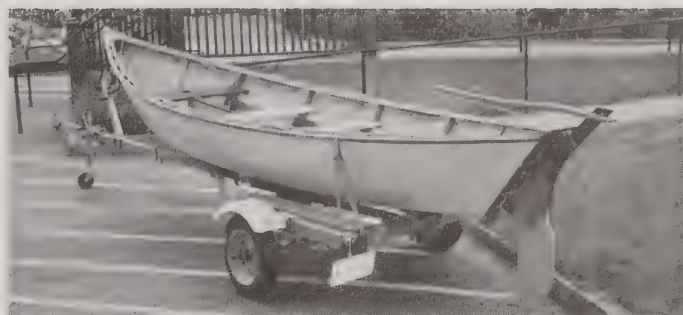
The vessel has been owned by three organizations. First, the Piscataqua Gundalow Project built and operated the boat from 1980-1993. Then Strawberry Banke Museum owned it until 2002. The current owner/operator is the non-profit Gundalow Company formed in 2002 with a new board of trustees, two year round staff members, and approximately 40 volunteers with a clearly stated mission to "preserve the *Captain Edward Adams* as a platform for maritime history and environmental education programs for school groups and the public throughout the Piscataqua region."

For the past two-and-a-half years the Gundalow Company has been actively promoting the gundalow as the traveling symbol that connects the past and the future of the Piscataqua Region. The Gundalow Company is currently building partnerships in all the riverfront towns connected to the Piscataqua River with local groups such as nature centers, waterfront redevelopment committees, water quality monitoring groups, land conservation and stewardship groups, museums, historical societies, schools, town planning boards, and heritage festival planners to develop collaborative programs that coincide with the gundalow's visits. All of these programs are designed to reinforce the connections between the regions' maritime heritage with contemporary water quality issues and future stewardship responsibilities.

For more information about where to see the gundalow, volunteer opportunities, and onboard education programs call Molly Bolster or Chuck Holloway at (603) 433-9505.







## Win This Boat And Support The Gundalow

The Gundalow Company recently announced a special raffle to support the education programs onboard the gundalow. This lovely dory was built by Nick Brown in 2003. Nick was the boatbuilder at Strawberry Banke for several years and designed this dory as a mix of the best of the straight sided Grand Banks dories and the round sided Swampscott dories of the North Shore beach fisheries. At 17' long and 48" wide with a draft of 4", the dory was built more to row than to sail; however, the optional low aspect ratio leg o' mutton sail can provide a nice boost in the right conditions. The centerboard and the rudder blade are designed to kick up when taking the boat onshore.

The lapstrake planking is white cedar, the lower garboards are eastern white cedar, and the three upper planks are northern Maine white cedar. The frames are black locust that was grown, felled, and sawn in New Hampshire. The transom and the forward thwart are Honduras mahogany. The stem is white oak, the thwart knees are apple, and the mast is spruce. The center board and rudder are marine plywood glassed with West system epoxy and inset with lead. The planks are fastened with copper clench nails manufactured at Strawberry Banke Museum. Other fasteners are copper rivets and silicon bronze screws. The interior finish is a mixture of boiled linseed oil, turpentine, and a little pine tar.

For a \$100 contribution to the Gundalow Company you can enter the raffle to win this dory (worth over \$5,000) that comes with a new trailer and a sailing rig. Your \$100 will directly support the education programs onboard the gundalow. Only 150 tickets will be sold so your chances of winning are quite high. The Raffle Drawing will take place in late December. If you have any questions, call us at (603) 433-9505.

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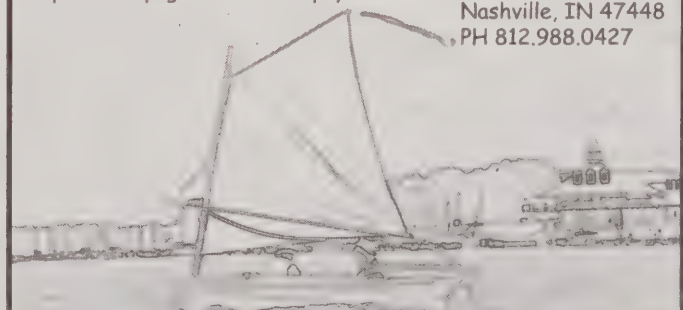
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# Exhilaration and Easy Enjoyment

## The Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival At St. Michaels, Maryland

By Dick Burnham

The Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival was a delightful success at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, Maryland, on October 2 and 3. As opposed to Bob Hicks' glum assessment of a lackluster Wooden Boat Show in Newport, Rhode Island, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum festival brimmed with boats, people of many ages, events for all, and days and evenings expressly designed to top up one's love of boating. So much appreciated, this was a relaxed event for small boat builders and enthusiasts.

Over 150 boats with owners participated, with fine design examples of such well-known designers as H. Chappelle, Ian Oughtred, Phil Bolger, Harry Bryan, Karl Stambaugh, Joel White, J. Michalak, and others. The eyes kept busy taking in all the boats on the grass, at the docks, as well as gazing at those sailing, rowing, paddling, or cruising with electric power on the water. There was even a radio-controlled model skipjack tacking about the docks.

Most boats were amateur built, while some were from the hands of professionals. It was difficult to see differences, though, as craftsmanship levels were high. Maybe too high because, heck, I can't yet build like that. When the owner-builder of a finely built stick-up flattie was asked if he'd won an award for his boat, he responded, "No, but I sure made the winners work for their awards."

Venerable boats caught the eye. There was a Moth, Bolger's Folding Schooner, antique 16-30 racing canoes with sliding hiking planks (I learned that 16-30 refers to the length, 16' and the beam, 30"). Clearly in sight at an adjacent dock that attaches to a large shed (holding historic smaller craft of the Chesapeake) were two Fenwick Williams catboats, floating on their lines. These were the works of the esteemed Tilghman Island, Maryland boat builder, Maynard Lowery, who came to chat with visitors on Sunday. It was, well, a dock crowded with respectful folks.

The festival excludes, does not need, and simply is above commercialism. How incredibly nice! No products advertised, no one hanging out signs offering services, no litter of discarded brochures to mess up the grass, and everyone with their hands free of collected papers. What a delight to enjoy roaming about, just looking at boats, conversing with owners and builders, and getting out on the water. Boats, just boats, from plastic kayaks to hand-wrought wooden masterpieces.

Ed Heins' newly finished self-built Chebacco cat-yawl, *Boudicea*, sailed wonderfully on her maiden saltwater launch and we were aboard taking in her excellent performance, steady on her feet, heeling in the breeze, easily cutting between little Optimist sailors and mega-yachts, with that mizzen sail nicely correcting for weather helm. Bravos due, yet again, to designer Phil Bolger.

The fee for each participant was \$65. This included several dinners under a huge open tent and there were coffee/muffin breakfasts, a variety of programs and events, a fair deal simply if one were to evaluate the cost of eating at local restaurants.

It was a full-blown full-time event, an exposition of the joy of small craft boating and we'd not think to miss it next year. Indeed, we plan to be back and this time, for sure, with our boats. I wonder if they'd mind if we sort of stayed on for a week or so?



At left from the top:

Along the waterfront, so much to see.

Detail on a Fenwick Williams designed catboat built by Maynard Lowery.

A nice workboat finished skiff.







The right stuff! Ulla Burnham at the helm of Ed Heins' Chebacco.



View along a dock with a Clemens built canoe yawl designed by Phil Bolger in the foreground.

A well-known and much admired figurehead.

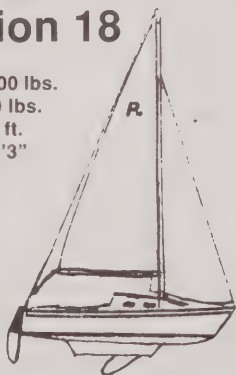


Bob LaVertue, the Springfield Fan Centerboard Co. man (holding mast), an accomplished canoe sailor, about to test sail a 16-30 sailing canoe, complete with hiking plank.

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Draft, Bd Up 1'6"  
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LWL 15'5"  
Beam 7'5"

15' C.B.  
16'-0" B.K.  
18' - 21' - 23'

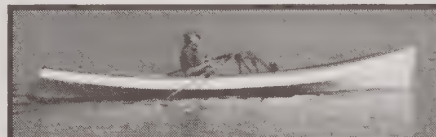


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## News of Hurricanes Alex and Bonnie

I was getting hungry as I paddled past Puddingpan Island and swung into Blueberry Bay to West Berlin. There also is an East Berlin, by the way, next bay over. I am not kidding, but having grown up in West Germany, I had to spend the night in West Berlin. It was a tiny, three-boat harbor but well protected behind a significant seawall/breakwater, a "Mauer" for all true Berliners. The tides were such that every morning I was leaving at dead low, so I had to make sure the afternoon before that I found a spot from which I could get to the water and not be stranded by the tide.

Steep and protected sand beaches and harbors with boat ramps, especially ones that have sloping wooden dinghy docks, are perfect. I am always confident I can find a small level 5' x 7' spot for my tent wherever I stop. Canadians are also very good about letting you pitch a tent almost anywhere. West Berlin, however, did not have a ramp, only steep piers and lots of mud flats, but I noticed a new wooden dock space up a bank at the end of the harbor, and that's where I pitched my tent that night like a new fish house.



West Berlin harbor perch.

Later that afternoon an older couple, who had turned the old boat shed next to me into a modest summer home, were busily tidying up their place, getting ready for the first

Port Mouton beach site.



## Scotia On My Mind Halifax Yarmouth Digby July/August 2004

### Part 2

By Reinhard Zollitsch

two hurricanes of the season, Alex and Bonnie. They were very concerned that the first storm had already reached Cape Hatteras and was coming up the coast like last year's Hurricane Juan. I did not like the news and decided to pay close attention to my NOAA weather reports. But I was not packing up, no way! Not now, anyway. At least I knew where those long swells were coming from which, by the way, followed me for the rest of my trip all the way to Digby.

### Champlain's Port Mouton

Thick fog again the next morning, but the shoreline was easy to follow by compass. I had to cross Liverpool Bay, a good 1.5 miles, and was glad I had my radar reflector. But again, no other boats were out on the water. I made it fine to Western Head headland which has such a powerful foghorn that I had to plug my ears every minute, it was so loud. I counted the seconds, and at 57 I stopped paddling and pressed my two pointer fingers in my ears.

Somewhere between Black Point and White Point the sun suddenly came out and the day turned absolutely beautiful and warm. I was approaching Port Mouton, which locals pronounce like "Matoon" as in "a spittoon in a saloon." This town was also named by Champlain, who lost a sheep over the side, the story goes. I am afraid the poor thing drowned.

I had picked a cove with a tiny island near the Spectacle Islands and I found a beautiful white broad sand beach with a steep granite wall behind it and deep enough water to get off in the morning. I finally got all my gear dried, including sleeping bag and pad, rain suit, and, most importantly, my one pair of paddling pants and shirt. There even were some modest white dunes covered with sparse beach grass off to my left. This was a great place, my best overnight spot so far, and I enjoyed myself immensely. But the water was

brutally cold again, but it was time for a shower bath with sea soap.

One other reason for stopping in that spot was the fact that a mile down the way the Canadian National Park Kejimikujik took up the next 10 nautical miles and does not allow any landing or overnighting on its shore. This could be downright dangerous for small boaters who do not plan right. I knew from a bad experience at the National Park at Forillon (Gaspé peninsula, Quebec) that those wardens mean business and would truck you out of the park, boat and all, stranding you like a beached whale at the park entrance. I am not kidding, folks! So if you are planning a trip along a Canadian National Park shore, plan it carefully, as I did. Hurricane Alex was off Cape Cod by now and was sending bigger and more frequent swells up my way. I was watching my step carefully.

I had left early in the morning that day and had no problem getting around the entire park in the relative calm of the early morning. The two crescent beaches in the park were large and stunning, the shore often treeless, just plain bare green ground cover, as if it had been harvested at one time and then used for grazing sheep.

At the next couple of headlands and points (Joli, Wreck, and Thrum) the swells got longer and were building menacingly over shoal areas farther and farther offshore before tipping over with that sickening, hissing, thunderous crash. Those waves looked like trip enders if I got caught sleeping and got hit by one of them. I felt greatly relieved making it around the ledge outcropping off Hardings Island into the tiny harbor of Jones Harbor, just east of the mouth of the Sable River. Harbormaster Bill and his friendly wife Rhonda offered me their cabin on the wharf, but I decided to "tough it out" in my tent. The wind had not really hit yet. The only casualty of today was my stopwatch. It must have run out of juice. Hope my wristwatch keeps on ticking and will see me through all the fog still to come on my way to Digby. I need it! The rest of my carrots got pitched today also. Green was not the right color for them. My bread was beginning to taste slightly fermented, but that was just too bad. Sorry, Nancy, I'm losing weight again (my usual ten pounds for the trip.)

### One Hour Rain Delay

It rained all night and into the morning. I gave myself a one hour rain delay, as in a baseball game, but then I got packing and was off again in Gore Tex and with lots of wet gear. It was dead low tide again, which meant a long portage to the water. A small craft advisory was out and a gale warning for the water's farther offshore. It was not a promising start but I decided to take today one step at a time, baby steps along the shore, like Bob in the old movie, *What About Bob?*

There was no fog and the wind had shifted to the northwest; i.e., it would come more from behind and help me down the coast for a change. The rain had turned into a steady drizzle. Those were three positives to cling to. If only there weren't Western Head, sticking its long thin finger out into the ocean. Raspberry, Haystack, Hemeon's, and Black Points I thought I could round with prudence, but Western Head? We'll see when we get there, I told myself consolingly. The only good thing about Western Head was that it



was the last point to round today before crossing Green Harbor and Jordan Bay so I could scoot into Lower Jordan Bay Harbor.

### The Haulover

Well, all went fine and Western Head was a no mistake situation, as I had anticipated. But it felt good being in Lower Jordan, drying out and warming up with some hot chocolate. I had paddled another 100 nautical miles. I was making great progress, I felt.

The next day the windjammers from Halifax were supposed to be in Shelburne Harbor, but I decided to skip the parade because it was 10 miles, or half a day, out of my way. I went instead around McNutt's Island and then straight south to East Point and into Negro Harbor Bay ("Bay of the Black Rocks," according to Champlain) to the Haulover, a 500-yard long narrow canal built in 1828. It is a straight cut through tidal grassland and must have been relatively easy to build. It was high tide, perfect to go through now. Tomorrow morning the canal would be dry. So I glided through "The Haulover" and pitched my tent on a tiny island on the other side in Port La Tour Bay.

### Big Bad Baccaro Point and Cape Sable Island

Tomorrow was going to be a significant stretch, down Port La Tour Bay and around another very exposed point, Baccaro, with a long extended bar and tides running across it hard, not to mention the swells from the hurricane passing offshore. Baccaro Point has a large radar station and is mentioned on every weather report for this region. I needed to plan my rounding very carefully. I was going to be there at dead low, I decided with good visibility, I hoped. Instead, the fog that morning was so thick I could not see shore 100' away from my little island. I postponed my departure until 8am, the latest I could leave to make low tide at the point. It was eerie, to say the least, paddling through a rock garden to hit John's Island and later Page and Crow Neck. I heard, but never saw, the many gray seals all around me until suddenly at Port La Tour Harbor the sun came out. Whew!

But Baccaro Point was as bad as anticipated. No, even worse. The tide was still running, creating a jumble of breaking waves off the point. I decided on the best possible route through that melee and shifted into my no mistake race mode. Speed for outrunning the breaking parts of the waves was of the essence. I was moving, always anticipating the waves from what previous waves had done in that spot. I was bathed in sweat. It was exciting, to say the least, a bit too much on the edge, but never over. I never had to throw a brace to stay up, I never was about to flip, I was right on, but also glad when I had rounded the point.

However, the tidal stream would not stop until I got way into Barrington Bay, almost six miles later, when I finally decided to cross over to the Cape Sable Island side and the huge rock causeway. Causeway??? No bridge??? A slight miscalculation on my part, but even if I had known that, I would not have gone around Cape Sable Island anyway. There should have been a bridge! Portage, I moaned.

It was long and hard, as all good portages are. It took me 100 minutes exactly, without a break, or help from any motorist zooming across this thoroughfare. I dragged



The Haulover/The Canal, Cape Negro Harbor.



Minimal island in Port La Tour Bay.

Cape Sable Island causeway.





my boat up some big rocks on driftwood planks, through a thorny rose patch, carried it along and across the highway and down the other side to the water, which fortunately was high.

I had picked a small harbor along the Barrington Passage for the night, but got engulfed in thick fog yet again and realized it was three miles or one hour from the causeway. I was spent after 7:20 hours in the boat and the portage. I mechanically put up my tent, had a hot drink and a can of Dinty Moore stew, took two Tylenol, and fell into bed.

### Turning the Corner

Next morning was a wonderful surprise, no rain, no fog, no wind, an easy launch down a wooden dinghy ramp, but most surprising was my new course. After going basically southwest for about 400 miles, since Cape Canso that is, I was suddenly headed north, or at least northwest up Cockerwit Passage towards Pubnico Harbor. I had rounded the corner and was now entering the Bay of Fundy. The tides were picking up, I knew, and I had to plan them in more carefully. I had learned that a couple of years ago, paddling from St. John, New Brunswick, back to Maine. But the southerly headwinds were suddenly pushing me along my way and even the sun was no longer in my eyes. I could get used to this new picture and the long, hard day yesterday was quickly forgotten.

Pubnico Point was my first test of the day. I planned to power my way against the ebb flow to the mouth of the harbor, arriving there at dead low in order to avoid the rip currents off its point and off Rip Point a bit up the peninsula. I believe my nautical charts.

Two huge wind generators clearly identified the point and when I got there the tide was just turning. It then helpfully pushed me up the shore towards my goal for the day in Abbot's Harbor. It has a nicely protected public landing or government wharf, as they are called in Nova Scotia, and a spectacular view of Lobster Bay from Whitehead Island with its prominent light to the distant tide ridden Tusket Islands on the horizon.

I had a chance to talk to a couple of fish-

ermen who were delighted to meet me. Friends along the south shore had put out the word about my venture, and I was sure they would pass on the news about the lonely sea canoeist along these shores towards Yarmouth and Digby. I felt quite honored.

We also talked about the new, rather lucrative, rockweed harvest, which a lot of lobstermen have picked up in the off season for this region (June 1 to December 1). This is not the traditional, light colored Irish moss,

Lobster Bay in my doorway.





but good old dark, stringy seaweed which, I understand, is used for anything from food additives to cosmetics.

I asked them about the cold water temperatures in these waters and they agreed with my observation, saying that it suddenly got colder three winters ago and never really warmed up again. Now the entire Lobster Bay and many harbors would freeze over in winter despite the salinity of the water and the vigorous tidal flow. This summer was also colder than usual. I did not hear a single cicada in August.

And yes, all fishermen warned me about "The Sluice" or "Hell's Gate" north of Tusket Island, which I was planning to go through tomorrow.

#### The Sluice/Hell's Gate

I needed a plan of action. I certainly did not want to go outside of the Tusket Islands or through Schooner Passage because of the strong tides, and I liked the challenge to figure out how I could best get through that narrow sluiceway safely. It is dry at low to almost mid-tide, so that would not work. I had to hit the tail end of high tide in order to flush through there, but not too early because Hell's Gate is said to run at five to eight miles per hour. But which way is it flooding? Neither my *Sailing Directions* nor Scott Cunningham's book says anything about that. But I figured it should flood west northwest, out into the open ocean, which is only a mile away from it, strange as this may sound. I was pretty sure the tide would come up around Pubnico Point into huge Lobster Bay and would want to go on into the Bay of Fundy proper; i.e., it would squeeze through all those many Tusket Islands in a northwesterly, and later northerly direction, towards Cape Forchu and Cape St. Mary's. Hell's Gate had to flood towards the ocean. I was pretty sure.

So I left Abbot's Harbor so that I would arrive at the critical point one hour before high tide, which should not occur until 6pm. But I soon doubted my decision since the tide was coming at me vigorously all the way to Wedge Point on Tusket Wedge Peninsula and even beyond. I felt I had made a crucial mistake and would have to wait out an entire tide cycle to flush through there and commence my trip. I hated to be wrong (being a teacher and all that, you know what I mean). I already castigated myself for my faux pas but kept inching my way closer to the maelstrom. I had to see it to believe it and voila, the tide was doing it my way; i.e., it flowed to the west northwest as I thought it should. All the other currents I had encountered on my way to this point were thus side currents up into Tusket River and its numerous large tidal side arms, which filled my entire nautical chart #4244.

I breathed a deep sigh of relief. Getting through the sluice itself was anticlimactic. I flushed through without a hitch and, for the night, joined a flock of sheep on Ram Island off Little Harbor River, two-and-a-half miles down the way, or better, to the northwest of The Sluice. My confidence was restored and I was eager to get to Yarmouth and Cape Forchu tomorrow. I even told Nancy via satellite phone that she should plan on my ETA (estimated time of arrival) in Barton/Digby four days from now on August 14th on the high tide at 10am (that man is crazy! I knew it all along!).

(To Be Continued)



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### For a Better Understanding

William Langewiesche's recent book, *The Outlaw Sea: A World of Freedom, Chaos, and Crime*, is recommended for those readers who want to better understand issues briefly reported in these columns. Among subjects addressed in the book are piracy, aging ships, ship scrapping, and the struggle between nations and international agencies for control of the seas. A review is coming soon.

### The International Scene

As usual, a sampling of what happened last month: Spain claimed that ABS knew of structural problems with the tanker *Prestige*. In the Timor Sea, an unresolved dispute between Australia and East Timor over borders is jeopardizing work on the \$3.5 billion Greater Sunrise oil and gas project. British trade unions may call U.K. flagged vessels "flag of convenience ships" if wages and conditions offered to overseas mariners fall below "decent minimum standards." Although U.S. ports saw few ships that failed to comply with the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code, more than 10% of the world's ports had not complied a month after the July 1 deadline. U.S. ports may see increasing congestion unless railroads can supply more cars.

### Hard Knocks and Cruel Places

A welder caused a fire that gutted the 60,000 ton tanker *Daqing No. 254* under repair at a Shanghai shipyard, killing one and critically injuring three others.

The U.S. Navy fast combat support ship *USS Seattle* (AOE-3) rescued 12 from the sinking Indonesian-flagged freighter *Edha II*.

The French trawler *Bugaed Breazh*, run down by an unknown ship in the English Channel six months ago, was raised and authorities are puzzled by identical dents about 30' long on either side below water.

The 700 ton cargo ship *Amani* capsized in heavy weather in the Banda Sea and 14 went missing while two others were saved. A rescue team enroute to search for survivors found the ferryboat *Risnawati* sinking and took off 37 passengers.

Near Busan, the empty Chinese chemical ship *Yueyou* collided with the Korean tanker *Sun Yagn* and a largish oil spill resulted.

The Pakistani cargo ship *Qadeer-ur-Rahman* sank on its way from the UAE and its crew of nine is considered to be dead.

In a German canal, a Dutch registered chemical tanker barge that had just off-loaded its cargo of naptha exploded, killing the owner/master and injuring six, including his wife and two children.

The empty tanker *Setia Jay Bandar* exploded off Sri Lanka and six crewmen died while the British tanker *British Pride* rescued 15. In a strange set of parallels, the chemical/oil carrier *Erais*, also in ballast, also exploded off Sri Lanka, killing another six mariners. Both vessels remained floating although badly damaged.

But not all news last month was grim. A Russian tug and barge missing on the Sea of Okhotsk were found by fishermen and all four aboard the tug were alive and well after drifting for 18 days. The main engine had failed and then batteries ran down so the tug had been unable to communicate.

At Malta, the master and mate of the

## Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

container ship *CMA CGM Verlaine* asked for bail. They had been in jail ever since somebody turned on a tunnel thruster and sucked an inspecting diver to his death.

About 300 miles from the Isles of Scilly, four British rowers trying to break the trans-Atlantic record for an west-east crossing were rescued after being in the water for nine hours after their *Pink Lady* broke in half during bad weather. One member blamed the mishap on a rogue wave.

At Rotterdam, the new cargo ship *Fairpartner* tested its thrusters but couldn't turn them off. It parted its moorings and surged into the side of the nearby large museum tug *Elbe*, holing it badly. Two tugs passing by rushed to pin the *Elbe* against its pier until two sheer legs, Smit's *Taklift 3* and Bonn & Mees' *Matador*, could arrive to raise the tug while a patch was made in the next-door shipyard and applied (perhaps only in Rotterdam can such help assemble so quickly).

### Navies

The CO of the U.S. destroyer *USS Carney* will keep his job even though his ship bumped the British frigate *HMS Sutherland* while personnel were being transferred by small boat during exercises off the Carolina coast in June. Ten other U.S. Navy commanding officers have been relieved of command so far this year.

During night flight operations, the U.S. Navy carrier *John F. Kennedy* somehow ran down a wooden dhow in the Arabian Gulf. Many promptly drew parallels between the accident and attacks by terrorist boats.

The Royal Navy is unhappy over the cancellation of the TV show "Making Waves" after only three episodes. It had helped by allowing producers full use of the frigate *HMS Grafton* and its crew of 170. But bigger problems bother the Service as it faces large cuts in its forces and how to sustain the U.K. shipbuilding industry by spreading work around fairly.

Russia's Navy Commander-in-Chief said submarine forces will be downsized, but not until 2020, while surface ships can be decommissioned earlier.

### Ferries

In New York, the City's ferries director, who was fired for various improprieties in 1996 but then rehired, was charged with 11 counts of manslaughter for neglecting safety practices that led to the ferry *Andrew J. Barberi* crashing into a pier, killing 10 and injuring others, one of whom died later. His brother-in-law, the operation's port captain, was charged with lying and obstructing justice. The pilot in charge of *Barberi* at the time of the accident acknowledged taking medications that caused him to be drowsy, pleaded guilty to manslaughter, and resigned. His doctor and the ferry's master were charged with making false statements.

The master may plea bargain for a lesser charge if he becomes a witness against the

director of ferry services. Away from the federal court, some survivors wanted the *Barberi* renamed after the Welsh nurse who administered first aid and comfort to the survivors. And the City has continued to pay the salaries of the director and the port captain plus the director's considerable legal expense. His lawyer stated that the City was standing by him to limit its liability against \$3.3 billion in lawsuits.

The new Toronto-Rochester fast ferry nicknamed *The Breeze* is hauling an adequate number of passengers after a belated start but the U.S. Customs still has not established a cargo examination area at Rochester so the ferry hasn't carried any trucks yet at fares of \$105 per.

Fares on the planned fast inter-island ferries in Hawaii may be as low as \$42, allowing a family of five to travel from Maui to Honolulu with their car for about \$530 vs \$1076 for airfare, parking, and a rental car. Total travel times would be comparable.

The Corolla Ferry, which operates on North Carolina's Currituck Sound, draws only 18" but will be aground some 100 days a year unless environment-focused state officials allow just a little dredging or a pier extension.

B.C. Ferry Services Inc., formerly a Crown property, must raise \$2 billion in the next 15 years to renew its aging fleet of 35 ferries. Provincial shipbuilders and politicians are upset at the company's recent decision to build two, possibly three, big ferries in Germany or Finland or Poland. The company had found that Canada's shipbuilding industry has lost the necessary infrastructure and skills to construct such large vessels.

### Cruising

A passenger on the *Carnival Miracle* managed to get access to the public address system and ordered the crew to abandon ship.

The small *Clipper Odyssey* ran aground in Alaska's Aleutian Islands, rupturing a forward fuel tank and forcing 153 passengers to leave.

In Hawaii, the tour boat *Spirit of Kauai* failed to spot divers in the water and ran over two of them. They were immediately taken to the nearby cruise ship *Pride of Aloha* for medical help. One diver lost a leg while the other suffered severe arm injuries.

### Short-Sea Shipping

The Maritime Commission reported that there were 56,759 ship calls by 6,157 vessels last year with an above-world-average vessel size of 49,703 dwt, largely due to the lack of U.S. feeder ships and short-seas container services.

The European Commission has defined four corridors in its "Motorways of the Seas" program to relieve traffic on that continent's overworked road system. But one company head sees a "nightmare scenario" at European ports if more intra-Europe road traffic is switched to sea transport. His company is now using the smaller, less congested ports.

### The Environment

The Greenpeace ship *Arctic Sunrise*, in Alaska to protest logging in federal forests, was held at Ketchikan when it arrived without a contingency plan for oil discharge prevention and a State of Alaska certificate of financial responsibility. The vessel's master



said, "The State has these rules for a good reason and I think that's fine... We simply overlooked something and we'll comply." The State found this excuse was inexcusable and unacceptable. Fines of over \$200,000 may result.

Animal welfare groups threatened to sue the U.S. Navy over its use of high-powered mid-frequency sonars, which the groups have linked to recent whale strandings, internal bleeding, and death (don't killer whales use high-powered blasts of sound to stun their prey and does the inverse-square rule still apply to sound attenuation in seawater)? The groups state that such sonars are used by 60% of U.S. Navy ships and submarines to detect enemy submarines.

The pushboat *Mr. Craig* and the tanker *Eagle Memphis* collided on the Mississippi in the heart of New Orleans and 50 barrels of oil were spilled.

On the Neches River in Texas, a refueling barge gashed the gasoline tanker *Torm Mary* that it was supposed to refuel and more than 30,000 gallons of heavy fuel oil were spilled.

A Singapore-flagged vessel carrying 200 tonnes of oil waste sank off Indonesia's Riau Islands and its cargo is beginning to pollute the area.

The ferry *Gotland* had engine problems and then a sludge tank overflowed, creating a film of oil in the port of Visby. Swedish authorities may prosecute.

Researchers will study whether ships sunk in the Gulf of Mexico during World War II have contributed to a healthy marine environment. The results would be used to evaluate what to do about obsolete oil rigs.

### Legal Matters

Citing security concerns, the U.S. State Department will no longer allow crew list visas and has mandated that each crew person desiring to go ashore in the U.S. must obtain one of the new BioVisas, good for five years and at any U.S. port. It has been suggested that the U.S. should recognize the ILO Convention 185 identity documents that incorporate biometric features, but no nation yet offers them and probably will not for some time.

### Shipbuilding, Repairing, and Scrapping

The Italian tug *Marzhemi* was arrested in Barcelona on behalf of the Spanish company that lost the contract for scrapping the decommissioned French aircraft carrier *Clémenceau* to a Turkish company.

And the ex-Brazilian aircraft carrier *Minas Gerais* is being scrapped on the beach at Alang.

Hungry landbased construction companies beat out well-fed Japanese shipyards for a \$5.5 billion contract to build a floating runway for Tokyo's Haneda Airport. The shipyards quickly consoled themselves, new building berths equivalent to about 70 VLCCs during 2006 and 2007 had been held in reserve for the airport job and will be quickly filled.

In an example of lose/lose, the scrapping of aging ships in the U.S. Reserve Fleets hit two more snags when environmental groups filed suit claiming that government agencies defied a law banning export of hazardous substances without a formal public review, while an attorney and his wife, whose home, purchased a few years ago, is within sight of

the James River Reserve fleet, alleged that government agencies violated the Clean Water Act and national law governing hazardous wastes by not disposing of the obsolete vessels sooner.

### Piracy, Terrorism, and Precautions

Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore started coordinated patrols of the Malacca Strait. The three-nation patrols were instituted largely in response to U.S. suggestions that it could operate patrols.

Singapore agreed but the other two nations dismissed the chances of an imminent terrorist attack, and the Indonesian Navy chief claimed the piracy and terror threat was part of an international conspiracy. Thailand will join the other three nations in patrolling the vital Strait, expected by many to be the scene of a terrorist attack.

But other waters were also dangerous. Pirates threw ten members of the tug *Global Semesta Satu* overboard in the Bangka Strait of Indonesia. The mate was picked up by another tug but the others are missing.

And Nigerian waters are now considered the most dangerous area because of the many weapons freely available there. The region ranked third in number of attacks in the first half of 2004 with 15 deaths in 13 attacks, but illegal siphoning off of Nigerian oil is fostering a particularly nasty bunch of pirates.

A Norwegian father and two children climbed aboard the liner *QM2*'s bulbous bow and perched there until another ship noticed them and radioed the Queen. Both ships were anchored in famed and relatively secure Geirangerfjord Fjord, a steep-sided bowl set deep amidst the peaks of the coastal range.

The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, India's southernmost state, asked the Prime Minister to stop the proposed India-Sri Lanka ferry service. He claimed the ferry would allow the rebel Tamil Tigers easy movement between the two nations, encourage drug smuggling, and attract asylum seekers.

The master of the Turkish bulker *Cenk Kaptanoglu* was tiring of a thorough U.S. Coast Guard inspection while underway on the Delaware River, so he told boarding officers a bomb was on board, then quickly recanted. Unamused, they ordered the ship to anchor. There it stayed for six days until a new master could arrive. The old master faces up to 15 years in federal prison for making false statements and filing a false bomb threat.

### Odd Bitts

Tiny Norfolk Island in the middle of the Tasman Sea off Australia keeps providing excitement for its 1800 residents; in 2002, the grounding and near-sinking of the destroyer *HMS Nottingham* and a murder (the first in 150 years) of a young woman. Now it has a second murder, that of the Island's Land and Environment Minister.

Barge traffic on the Ohio River will stop for two weeks while cracks in a lock's doors are repaired. Estimates were that some 1800 barges would be moored for at least 60 miles in each direction. Work on a parallel lock chamber was stopped by insufficient funding and it will not be finished for another six years or so.

Joe Vittoria sold his Avis Car Rental business and started building luxury yachts for charter. The latest is *Mirabelle V*, a giant sailboat with a record-making 292' mast and

a weekly charter rate of \$250,000. That provides up to 12 people with considerable luxury.

In the Pacific Northwest, Prince Rupert has transformed itself back into a thriving port. Part of its attraction to container shippers is a direct connection to a trans-continental railroad. And farther north, a new port at Port MacKenzie, about two miles from Anchorage, should be operational this fall. The port will handle bulk goods such as wood chips, limestone, and coal.

Searchers found the submarine mine-layer *U-125* in 90 metres of water off Nova Scotia's southern coast. It was sunk in 1942 soon after it torpedoed the munitions-carrying American Liberty Ship *Alexander Macomber* and before it could lay its mines in Boston Harbor.

The U.K.'s Maritime and Coastguard Agency conducted a major study on the effects of offshore wind farms on electronic equipment, including such worse cases as finding a dinghy or even individuals within a wind farm complex.

Rogue waves have battered large cruise ships such as the *QE2* and *Bremen* and undoubtedly have been responsible for many ships disappearing at sea. Satellite-borne synthetic aperture radars have detected 466 rogue waves in 12 years (including more than 10 waves above 25 metres in height in one three-week period that was intensively studied) and this has forced modifications of the frequency of the "10,000-year waves."

"Rogue waves are often encountered where ordinary waves meet ocean currents and eddies, while sustained winds from long-lived storms may enlarge waves moving in sync with the wind.

Italian coast guards intercepted a 58' wooden barge with 250 Africans as it approached the island of Lampedusa south of Sicily. And Italy seized a German-flagged "humanitarian aid" vessel and arrested its master, chief officer, and owner for assisting illegal immigrants. The Interior Minister said there were two million people waiting in Libya alone to try to reach Italy.

A Canadian report revealed that the Japanese fishing vessel *Shinei Maru 85* had no full-time master, navigator, or lookout when it ran aground just after leaving Halifax last year. The harbor pilot gave traffic safety instructions to the radio operator, who he assumed was the master, but somebody had set the autopilot soon after leaving the dock and then walked away.

Divers are exploring the wreck of King Henry VIII's flagship *Mary Rose* to determine how much of it remains where a channel into Portsmouth Harbor may have to be dredged for the Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers, dug in service in eight years.

Maersk Sealand may be acquiring container ships carrying about 11,000 TEU. The reports are based on an order for a 14-cylinder, 980-mm bore, two-stroke MAN B&W engine providing 108,920hp (80,080kw). Such an engine would require a propeller larger than can be cast in any foundry, which suggests use of bolt-on blades. Reports state that Maersk has opted for length in the new vessel rather than increased beam, probably using ten tiers of containers across 15 rows, but no outsider knows for sure because Maersk has its own shipyard at Odense in Denmark.



The Disappearing Propeller Motorboat was basically a double ended, lapstrake rowing skiff converted to be a powered boat by placing a single cylinder, low horsepower, two cycle, inboard gasoline motor in the center. The motor was connected by way of a universal joint to a hinged and elevating propeller shaft that also protected the propeller from underwater impact damage using a curved skeg (propeller) guard.

The disappearing propeller device was invented in Port Carling, Muskoka, Ontario, and is attributed (not without some controversy) to skiff and launch builder W.J. "Billy" Johnston, Jr. (1881-1968), a resident of Port Carling. Johnston (with financial support) applied October 23, 1914, for a patent that was granted on March 16, 1915.

The Dispro (an abbreviation) was quite different from other inboard launches of that time because of its patented device. The propeller shaft, propeller, and skeg could be easily raised by the operator into a cast iron or aluminum housing to be flush with the boat bottom for storage, docking, or beaching. Additionally, if the hinged skeg was accidentally impacted on rocks, logs, etc. while underway it would automatically swing up into the housing, thus preventing any serious damage. This was an important safety and economic factor in the uncharted recreational boating waters of that time period.

This extremely quiet little motorboat, known later as the Silent Dispro, was almost an immediate success. This was due largely to its timely market introduction, relatively low cost, and its special usage features. Considered by many as the "Model T" of the marine industry, it cost about the same as the Ford automobile of that time with models starting at \$225 FOB Port Carling. Perhaps for the first time since the introduction of gasoline powered boats, a more average income cottage owner or fisherman could afford the pleasure of buying and operating his or her own motorboat.

The original motor for the Dispro was the single cylinder, 2hp, two cycle, copper jacketed Waterman engine from Detroit weighing in at just 46 lbs. This gave way to the Canadian copied 2-1/2hp Kingfisher and the 3hp Silent Dispro which was by far the most popular in initial production numbers. Later a few Quebec built Caron motors and many St. Lawrence motors from Brockville were used. A two cylinder opposed twin English four cycle Coventry Victor of 4hp was used on later Greavette Boat Company Dispro production. A very economical 25mpg was the normal fuel consumption at a cruising speed of 6-8mph.

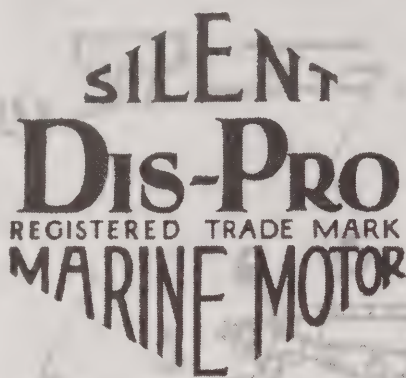
In the early '20s the Dispro boat was produced in large quantities in the Port Carling factory, reportedly up to 300 to 400 units per year. Export demand for the boat prompted the opening of a franchised second plant in Tonawanda, New York, which only operated for two years (1921-1922). Some boats were reported to have been exported as far away as South America and China at that time.

In 1923 things began to look bleak for the future of the Disappearing Propeller Boat Company for several reasons, some of which were: (1) a sudden turndown of the economy following WWI; (2) overly optimistic sales forecasting which resulted in very high factory inventory of unsold product; (3) competition and many advances in new high speed,

## The Greatest Little Motorboat Afloat

### A Short History of the Dispro

By Joe Fosse, y Founding President of The Dispro Owners Association 1979



low weight outboard motors; and (4) serious partnership disputes regarding all of the above. The final blow was struck in July, 1924, when the Bank of Nova Scotia foreclosed on outstanding debts, forcing the company into bankruptcy.

Following a period of litigation, the assets of the Company and the patent rights were sold by liquidators to a Mr. Tom Hodson of Lindsay. Despite a valiant effort to revive the Company in 1925 and 1926 by him and the talented sales and plant manager, William G. Ogilvie, they could not generate enough sales orders to keep the plant operating and it closed its doors for good in 1926.

A bitter W.J. "Billy" Johnston and several of his former senior employee managers crossed over to the upper side of the Port Carling locks and built a new boat plant naming it the Port Carling Boatworks. Here they started building the now famous line of Seabird boats. But that, friends, is definitely another story for another time.

When the Dispro factory closed in 1927 the assets and patents were purchased by Toronto businessman Charles J. Barr, who was convinced there was still a market for the Dispro boat on a build-to-order basis rather than mass production and its resulting inventories. Barr made a contractual agreement with skilled boatbuilder Samuel Botting of the Lindsay Boat Company to make Dispros as required when orders were taken.

Fate stepped in again with the great stock crash of 1929, with Charles Barr losing all of his many holdings in the devastated North American stock market failure. Sam Botting, with the help of a struggling young lawyer friend named Leslie Frost, was awarded the residuals of Barr's boat company, including the Dispro patent by reason of default in contractual payment. He renamed it The Lindsay Disappearing Propeller Boat Company and produced a number of fine quality Dispro boats up to the year 1935. It is estimated that

Lindsay Dispro production was approximately 150 boats in total.

Building of the Dispro boat returned to Muskoka when the Greavette Boat Company of Gravenhurst purchased the patterns and patents from Sam Botting in 1936. It seemed rather odd (and reportedly very unpopular with many employees) that Thomas Greavette would undertake the building of slow, old Dispros. After all, Greavette was known for building their famous Streamliner models and internationally famous *Miss Canada* series of racing boats for Harold Wilson and his father Earnest Wilson of Ingersoll.

Tom Greavette, it seems, had been holding a soft spot in his heart for the Dispro as several of his brothers had worked at the original Disappearing Propeller Boat Company in Port Carling. He planned to build Dispro boats as a work generating fill-in project between major production of their other boat models. Greavette builders made several improvements in machinery and hull design, producing approximately 400 Dispros in the Bay Street, Gravenhurst, plant between 1936 and 1958.

With a few exceptions, Johnston and Lindsay Dispro boats were primarily constructed with cypress wood planking and steamed white oak ribs. Greavette Dispros were, again with a few exceptions, planked with western red cedar and steamed white oak ribs. Greavette also introduced the smooth running Coventry Victor English motor post-WWII for the Dispro, providing a much smoother and faster ride. Greavette also retro fitted many older model Dispros with the new 1950s electric start motor.

Dispros were made in three basic models. The Waterford was 16'6" length with a 49" beam. At times this was also alternately known as a Scout model. The John Bull was 16'6" long but had a very wide beam of 59" resulting in larger carrying capacity. The Uncle Sam, at 18'6" length and 56" beam, was the largest and most popular model built. It should be noted that Greavette Boat Company built only the 18'6" version for all of their Dispro production.

Advertised as "The Greatest Little Motorboat Afloat," just over 3,000 Dispros were made over the years. Unfortunately, most have succumbed to time and rot. Although originally very well built, the majority were done in by pure neglect and improper care, uncovered storage, and slapstick amateur repairs. Some are known by the author to have ended up as fuel for a family corn roast or even cottage flower boxes. Others were ceremoniously sunk at sea to dispose of the unsightly hulk.

The Dispro boat was produced for 44 years, from 1914 to 1958, a number thought to be unmatched by any other single design among small motorboats. Certainly the known production record itself defies any suggestion that the Disappearing Propeller Boat was a mere gimmick. The self preserving running gear and high fuel economy were certainly not a gimmick to the many owners who ran them over rocks and logs in northern lakes and rivers, some lasting for generations of family.

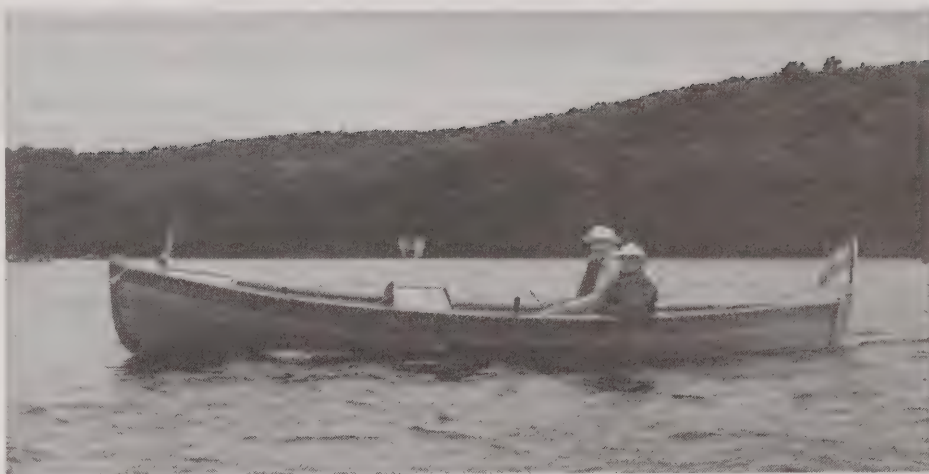
Combined with the timeless beauty of its skiff design, the Dispro's simple and safe propulsion system has clearly earned the Dispro a high place of honour. Their nostalgic lines and legendary performance are re-



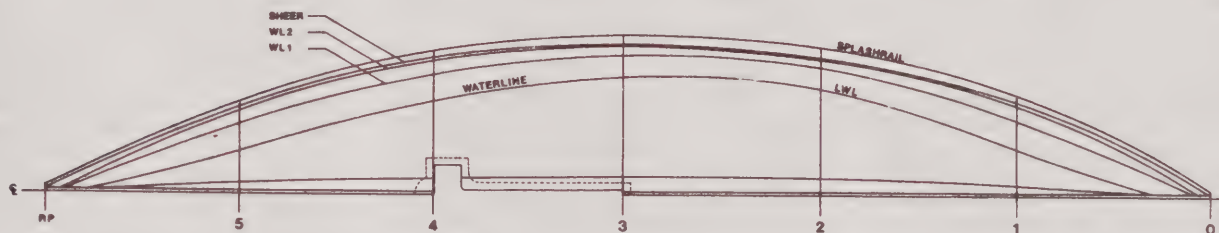
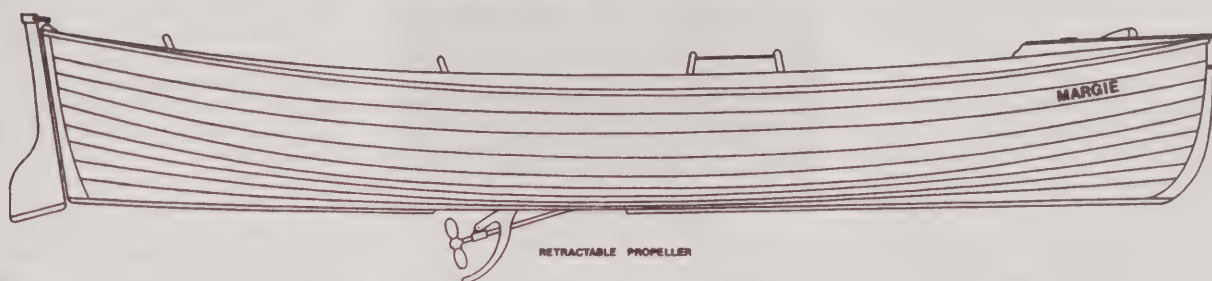
membered and held dear in the hearts and minds of many cottagers, boatmen, and fishermen, plus present day owners and enthusiasts.

We have enjoyed the wonderful camaraderie of owning and operating our self-restored Greavette Dispro *Margie* for countless hundreds of miles of cruising with Dispro friends over the last 28 years. With love and a little care, our grandchildren will hopefully be able to preserve her for continued historic use and fun with their future families.

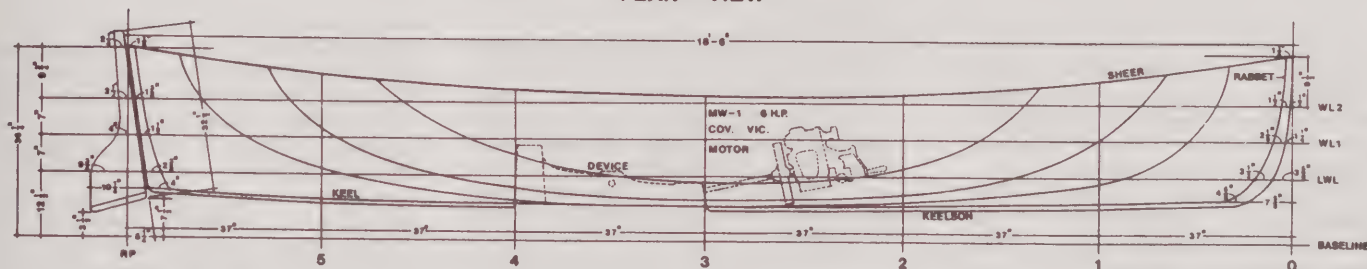
My wife Irene and I enjoying *Margie* on the Lake of Bays in Muskoka, Ontario.



## THE DISAPPEARING PROPELLER MOTORBOAT



PLAN VIEW



PROFILE

### TABLE OF OFFSETS

DIMENSIONS IN: FEET - INCHES - EIGHTHS

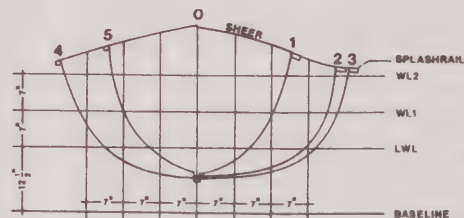
#### HEIGHTS ABOVE BASELINE

STATION	0	1	2	3	4	5	RP
SHEER	3-0-0	2-7-2	2-4-3	2-4-2	2-6-2	2-6-2	3-0-2
SPLASHRAIL	3-0-0	2-6-6	2-3-6	2-3-4	2-4-4	2-6-0	3-0-2
BUTTOCK 3			1-1-7	0-11-2	1-4-6		
B2		1-7-4	0-8-0	0-8-1	0-10-0	1-9-1	
B1		0-11-1	0-7-8	0-6-7	0-7-6	0-11-4	
KEEL		0-7-6	0-7-2	0-6-8	0-7-2	0-7-6	
KEELSON		0-6-7	0-6-3	0-6-7	0-6-3	0-6-7	

#### HALF BREADTHS

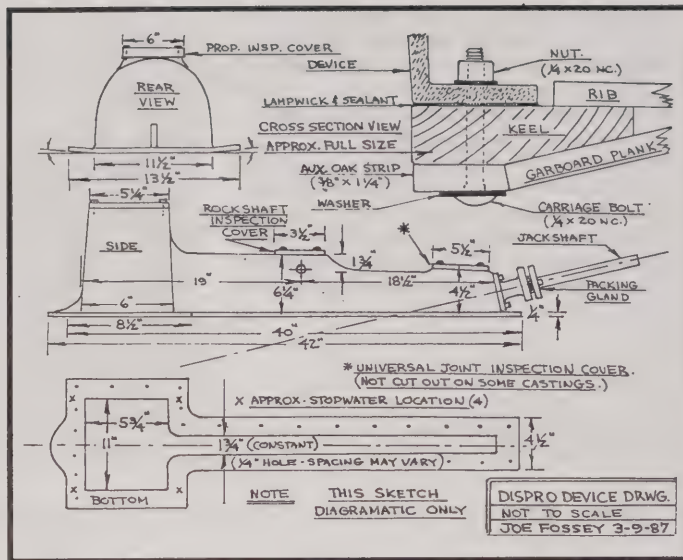
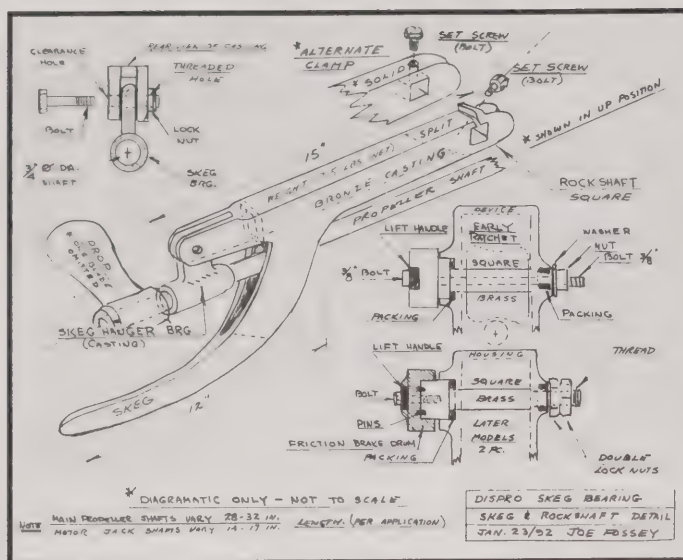
SPLASHRAIL	0-1-0	1-7-4	2-4-2	2-6-6	2-3-4	1-5-6	0-1-0
SHEER	0-0-2	1-8-6	2-2-3	2-8-0	2-2-1	1-4-6	0-0-2
WL2		1-8-0	2-2-1	2-4-8	2-1-3	1-3-6	
WL1		1-2-4	2-0-4	2-2-8	1-10-6	1-1-2	
LWL		0-6-7	1-8-4	1-10-4	1-8-6	0-6-1	
KEEL		0-2-1	0-2-7	0-3-1	0-2-7	0-2-0	
KEELSON		0-0-4	0-0-4	0-0-4	0-0-4	0-0-4	

GREAVETTE DISPRO MARGIE  
 SERIAL NO. 10-45 YEAR 1945  
 LENGTH 16'-6" WIDTH 8'6"  
 OWNERS: JOE & IRENE FOSSEY  
 LINES BY: J.F. OCTOBER 1982  
 DRAWING BY: D.J. CAUNTER  
 BARRIE ONTARIO CANADA



SECTION





To paraphrase a famous author's work, it seems, "Nothing, absolutely nothing is quite half so much fun as simply messing about in a Dispro."

My interest in the wonderful world of boating began as a youth building models and as a young man's do-it-yourself, 1950s, home built, wooden boat hobby. This start grew into my building successful, fast, inboard racing runabouts for sanctioned powerboat racing in the Canadian Boating Federation and American Power Boat Association. Eventually this hobby led to a long term marine industry career across Canada in technical service management at Chrysler Marine, followed by Bayliner, J Craft, and Caravelle Boat Companies.

My first involvement with a Dispro happened in earlier years (circa 1950) near my wife Irene's family cottage located on Southern Georgian Bay. There was a local resident and commercial fisherman there named Burns, who actually used his Dispro boat daily to service his licensed gill nets in all kinds of weather. Having a few rides in this ancient one lugger in rough Georgian Bay waters was definitely an experience to remember. However, I quite liked the simple little copper jacket motor and was fascinated with the idea behind the disappearing propeller drive unit that allowed the boat to be pulled up on the shore without damage.

In 1976 Irene saw an advertisement in a local newspaper for a Dispro boat for sale in Orillia and we went to have a look at it. There, sitting in the owner's basement in pieces and in need of complete restoration, was Greavette Dispro #45-10. The rest, as they say, is history. After competing with another anonymous bidder, we purchased *Margie* for \$650. It's really difficult to believe that we've owned or saved eight other Dispros (in whole or in part) since that time.

We thought that we had probably just purchased the only Dispro boat left in the world. Our Port Carling marine industry friends, Alf Mortimer and Aud Duke in particular, made short work of that idea and convinced us otherwise. We then started searching for other Dispros and their owners and also contacting and keeping written records of any Dispro boat, owner, or Dispro enthusiast who was seen or heard of in our marine industry or recreational boating travels.



## The Dispro Owners Association

By Joe Fossey D.O.A. Archivist

In 1977 the town of Gravenhurst celebrated its Centennial year and marked the occasion with a gathering of Muskoka boats. Back then there was no Sagamo Park as we know it today. The event was held at the old Greavette plant dock and adjoining Robson's Marina site. There were only two Dispros that attended the regatta, our *Margie* and Ron and Jane Hill's *Emily*.

During that show Dr. Jim Smith introduced himself to us and mentioned that he, too, was searching for, and keeping records of, Dispro owners. We agreed to meet and combine our lists in hopes of promoting a meeting of the owners and enthusiasts in the future. After the show another good looking Greavette Dispro appeared from out of nowhere and zipped around inner Gravenhurst Bay at truly amazing speeds. With only one small person in it, this Dispro looked like the hull was actually planing as it skimmed across the surface of the water.

The boat was owned and driven by sprightly, 78-year-old Bert Hurst of Gravenhurst. Bert started as a nailer at the original Port Carling Disappearing Propeller Boat Plant in 1920. Later he worked for Ditchburn Boats and was formerly the motor installation foreman at Greavette Boat Company. Bert turned out to be a truly great friend and for many years a friendly, free service advisor to many needy Dispro Owner Association members. His boat, *B.J.*, was definitely, and we think still is, the fastest Dispro ever made (#42-1). Now owned by Ruth Sutton and named *Wud Naut*, Harry is allowed to drive it (but only fast enough to win)!

At this time, the Toronto Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society had not even been thought of and we belonged to the Manotick Chapter (formed in 1976). For a couple of years we had the only Dispro boat at the Ottawa show. *Margie* being a very unusual boat for that, area, I was asked by the late Ray Nelson, owner/editor of the original *Classic Boating* magazine, to write an article about Dispro history.

During the next year or so, Jim Smith and I exchanged a number of visits and then combined our lists of Dispro owners and sightings into a common file. We agreed to share the costs and hold a meeting at the Continental Inn Hotel in Barre on Sunday April 29, 1979. I made up a hand drawn invitation form which we had photocopied and Irene mailed about 100 of these to people on the combined list.

The meeting, by any standard, was truly successful and is the reason the Association celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2003. Thirty-eight people attended, of which 29 signed up as members at \$5 annual dues to cover the room rental and mailing cost of a proposed newsletter and membership roster. The 29 Charter Members who registered and signed up at the first Dispro Owners Association meeting were Dick Murphie, Peter Lapey, Jim Smith, Jess Hancock, Phil Austin, Roger Dymont, Wayne Scarr, Jack Freeborn, James Sammut, David Stringer, Barbara Morris, Omer Stringer, Steve Ware, Paul Gockel, John Thomson, Don Partrick, John Pearce, Paul Dodington, Doug Brown, Joe Fossey, Rod Maxwell, Tom Wood, Nick Turnbull, Tom Lackie, Don Rolland, Chuck Knight, George Rowsell, Bob Blair, and Ed Skinner.

Through research and referrals, membership almost doubled in 1979 to 55 persons. The first Dispro Owners Association Regatta, held September 8-9, 1979 at Pinelands Lodge, was a real social success with 19 boats and family crews from Ontario and the United States converging to enjoy putting around Lake Joseph.

One of the highlights of that Regatta was the dinner guest appearance of 94-year-old Mrs. W.J. Johnson, widow of the inventor of the Dispro, W.J. "Billy" Johnson. Also of note was the unplanned dock walk reunion of three members from the original Port Carling



Dispro factory crew; planker Charlie Amey, nailer Bert Hurst, and varnisher Reg Stevens, together again almost 60 years later.

Perhaps it's the relatively small size of the boat, simple antique engine design, and self maintenance factor that encourages Dispro Owner Association members to be ardent do-it-yourself restorers. There has always been an exceptional amount of camaraderie amongst the members, who are always ready to share restoration ideas and to offer experienced advice.

The introduction of fall workshops with printed take home notes and hands-on demonstrations by experienced Dispro owners or professional restorers help to educate both new and long time owners about their boats and motor needs and to preserve them for future generations to enjoy. The first one was held in Port Carling in 1986 at the relocated Greavette Boat Plant on the Indian River and was hosted by Rob Haggard and Paul Dodington. The next was held at Glen Orchard Schoolhouse Community Center in 1989. Since that time workshops have been held every other year at George Rossiter's Shop in Collingwood and most recently at Dwight Boyd's boatshop in Campbellford. These workshops and their information have truly raised the level of confidence in members' restoration skills and elevated the operating enjoyment of many Dispro owners to a much higher level.

Although many of you have taken some long trips in our Dispro boats, absolutely nothing can ever compare to the 2500-mile downstream navigation of the Mackenzie River from Great Slave Lake to the Beaufort Sea accomplished by the late Bruce Clarke in 1983. This re-enactment trip was completed without incident with Bruce's nephew and our own Barry Otton as crew members. Aside from bears, the only hitch was fuel supply and refueling while underway.

Another very important milestone in the Dispro Owners Association history was the publication in 1983 of the complete Dispro history book, *The Greatest Little Motorboat Afloat*, by Boston Mills Press. Written by members of an elected Dispro Owners Historical Committee, Paul Dodington, Paul Gockel, Jim Smith, Ron Hill, and myself, the book is nearing the end of its third printing and is considered the benchmark journal of Disappearing Propeller Boat history. The images with this article are all culled from its pages.

We were fortunate to have contacted Peter H. Spectre of *WoodenBoat* magazine about the pending publication of the Dispro book. Peter responded by attending our 1982 Regatta and headlined a ten-page article (a

Peter Spectre quite liked the simple little copper jacket motor



Eighteen people crowded into a Deluxe Model. Approximate weight 3,126 lbs. Still 9" of freeboard and a boat making headway.

condensed version written by the book authors) with a full colour Dispro cover. This article really helped to raise the profile of the Dispro internationally. Many Dispro owners and enthusiasts responded to the article over the years and correspondence was actually received 10-15 years after the November/December 1983 publication date.

Another milestone in the Dispro Owners Association history was the huge responsibility undertaken by the Dispro Ladies Auxiliary in 1996 to raise the necessary capital funding to restore the very time-worn Dispro on display at the Port Carling Museum. The *Greatest Little Cookbook* production was undertaken and capably administered by Betty Dymont to make this difficult project a reality and a resounding financial success. Thank you, hard working Ladies Auxiliary, for your dedication to this fundraising event.

We must also be thankful to Dick Bell as the tireless and energetic project manager on restoring the Museum Dispro. With the necessary (and much more) woodwork undertaken and expertly replaced by Dwight Boyd, he also beautifully refinished the boat, then designed and built a new modern display stand and donated it to the Museum.

In revisiting the 25-year history of the Association, one cannot begin to name every single person who has made a vital and lasting contribution to the success of the Association. For every member mentioned here, there are many more Dispro "friends" who were there for us when we needed them. Special, very special, thanks must go to Happy Thomson for two decades of service in being membership secretary, and newsletter editor for all Dispro Association mailings, along with her brother Alf LeGard for tirelessly doing all the Association printing and publishing. Thanks, also, for our fun-filled years and laughs with auctioneers Roger Dymont, Rod Maxwell, Ray Prophet, and Dwight Boyd. They have contributed many countless years of fun and important fund raising to maintain the Association's finances and contributions necessary to preserving the Dispro for future generations to enjoy.

Currently there are about 400 family members in our roster representing approxi-

mately 200 operating Dispro boats. Membership is strong in central Ontario, New York, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Georgia, and Dispro popularity is increasing rapidly in the Mount Dora region of Florida.

I would like to close by offering my personal thanks to all of the membership, both present and past, plus all past executive officers for your dedication and generous support from near and from far over the last 25 years. It was a pleasure for me to have been elected as the founding President of the Dispro Owners Associations inaugural meeting in 1979 along with co-founder Dr. Jim Smith, who was elected Secretary/Treasurer. Many thanks to my wife Irene, (former treasurer) and unofficial keeper of many file folder boxes and binders full of every club event, minutes, correspondence, and transactions that have occurred since. Last year it was nice to be appointed (it's called volunteering) as the Association Archivist.

Off to a good start in the new century, we know that in the future Dispro boats and the Dispro Owner Association with its very strong roots and with many new followers, owners and enthusiasts, will continue to flourish for years to come.

If you have any questions or inquiries about the Dispro boat or Dispro Owners Association, please contact Joe Fossey, 305 Duckworth St., Barrie, ON, Canada L4M 3X5, (705) 726-6600.



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## 25 Dispros in the Big Chute

Twenty-five Dispros on the "Big Chute" marine railway car on the Trout-Severn Waterway at a bygone regatta. The car was lowered almost completely into the water, allowing a first row of Dispros to float right up to the higher end of the platform. Slowly then moving the car ahead about 20' the railway operators placed another row, and then repeated this procedure until the fifth row and all 25 Dispros were loaded. With the disappearing propeller devices full up and the rudders off their screw eyes, the Dispros sat right on their bottoms.

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# The Big Chute Marine Railway

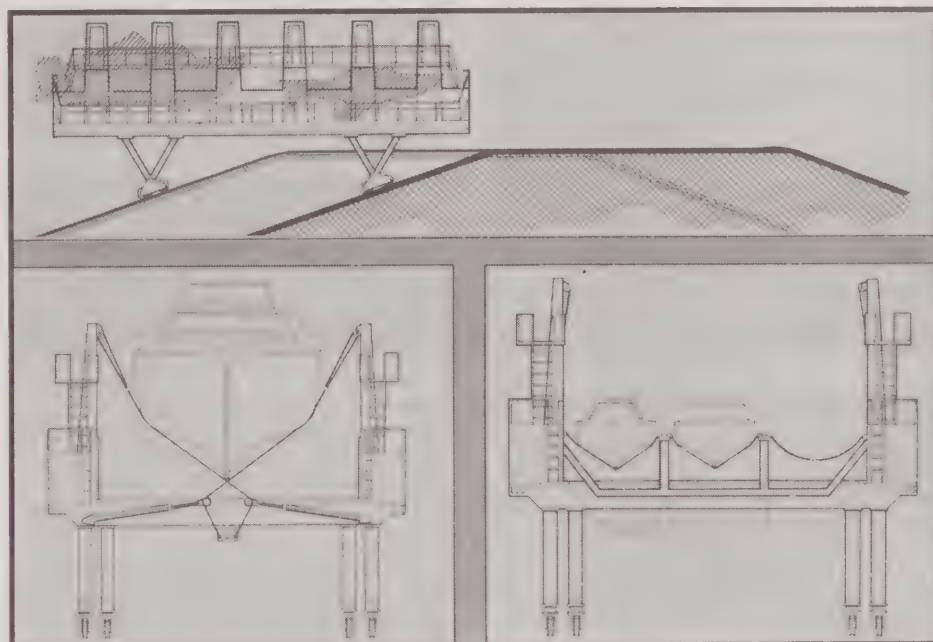
From the Trent-Severn Waterway brochure published by authority of the Minister of the Environment, Minister of Supply and Services, Canada

The marine railways at Big Chute tell a tale of engineering and circumstance that are an integral part of the heritage of the Trent-Severn Waterway.

Here, where the Severn River rushes through a narrow chute of pre-Cambrian granite, a marine railway has been in operation since 1917. Today's giant-sized carriage and tracks were installed adjacent to the still operating smaller railway in 1977. Although replacing the marine railway with a conventional lock would have been simpler, the land portage over the 17.7 meter (approximately 56') height of land was necessary to prevent the possible migration of the parasitic sea lamprey into the Lake Simcoe fishery.

Indeed, the original plans of the early 1900s called for conventional locks to be built, not only at Big Chute, but also at the Swift Rapids site upstream. Ambitious excavation and construction projects were begun at both locations but ground to a halt as money for government projects was diverted to the Great War. Marine railways were quickly built as temporary measures. At Big Chute, dams, two locks, and a manmade lagoon had been well underway. Work stopped. Construction crews, once numbering over 200 men, were paid off and dismissed. The works abandoned by those early labourers now lie overgrown and hidden in the surrounding forest.

Unique in North America, the Big Chute Railway carries boats over a 17.7m height of land on a giant travelling carriage. Boats floated onto the partially submerged car are cradled in a variety of slings. A unique double track uses an offsetting cam principle to keep the carriage nearly level at all times, save for a slight tilt to facilitate loading and off loading. The larger Big Chute Marine Railway was installed to carry the increased size and volume of traffic using the Waterway.





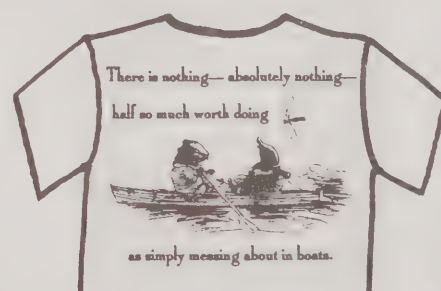
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Incredible weather, fabulous cruising grounds, picturesque resort, and, of course, the best people and camaraderie in the world, all came together for our 26th annual reunion last summer. Attendance came to 42 Dippys and 140 people. There were some first-time people and some first-time boats but not necessarily together. Some owners had been to a regatta before but not their boats, some boats had been to a regatta before but not their owners, and there were some owners without their boats.

This year's annual regatta was held at the beautiful and peaceful Opinicon resort at Chaffey's Lock on the historic Rideau River and Canal System. "From its simple beginning as the Chaffey's family residence in early 19th century Upper Canada, to a boarding house in the 1890s, to a men's fishing club in the early 1900s, the Opinicon has evolved into one of Eastern Ontario's oldest and most respected resorts. It has been owned and operated by the same family since 1921 and, while retaining its grandeur, has been updated to offer every convenience and restful accommodation." So says their Web site.

It was bit like a step back in history. I think the last update was probably in the '50s or '60s judging from the furnishing and the TVs with rabbit ears and not a computer or Visa machine in sight. This contributed greatly to the ambiance and character of this beautiful resort and I'm sure made some folks feel right at home. The expansive grounds were well shaded with those grand old growth oak trees. I'm certain I saw more than one boatbuilder in attendance eyeing them up and down and licking his lips.

## 26th Annual Dispro Regatta

By Dwight Boyd  
Secretary Dispro Owners Association

On Friday afternoon a steady stream of old faces and new arrived, settled in, and picked up conversations with old friends where they left off a year ago. Friday afternoon also saw looks of terror on some of these faces as they first laid eyes on the approach to the launch ramp. Backing off the road and down that hill to the ramp even gave some of the old pros sweaty palms. However, with many people to offer directions, encouraging words, and gales of laughter, launchings were accomplished without any permanent damage to boats, cars, docks, or egos.

After dinner on Friday we were still wondering if the labour action by the lock workers would affect us the next day or not. For our Skipper's meeting it had been arranged for a representative of the Rideau Canal System to speak to our group and give us a history of the canal and the area we were about to enjoy. Unfortunately, I can't remember his name, but his was one of the best presentations I have heard in a very long time.

He informed and entertained with his extensive knowledge of the canal and particularly of the local area. His tales and anecdotes of some of the situations and colourful old timers who have worked the canal over the years had us laughing throughout. He interacted with his audience with humour, wit, and a sense of delivery and timing that would rival the best stand-up comics. This guy sure knew how to work a room, but he couldn't tell us if the lock would be open in the morning.

Saturday morning, clear, sunny, warm, and good news about the locks. They would be open and not disrupt our plans. After breakfast, after the usual scramble at the docks to get our finely tuned machines fired up and off, we set for our cruise down the Rideau, through Davis Lock and on down to the picturesque and historic village of Jones Falls. Approaching Davis Lock the flotilla started jockeying for position and a spot in the lock. Now, controlling our wonderful little boats can be at times tenuous at best, but throw in a current and crowded circumstances and things can get downright entertaining. Why, I even saw one boat trying to ram another, twice!

To assist us with our locking through experience, the leather lunged lockmaster barked and bellowed orders until we were all safely settled in like a bunch of very large ducklings on a very small pond. Once the gates were closed the L L lockmaster threatened not to let us out until someone ponied up to pay the tab. I think Happy sweet talked him as only she can and off we went. Old leather lungs later told us that we set a record for footage in that lock, 27 Dippies, one tin boat, and one tour boat. You can do the math.

The beautiful cruise on down to our destination of Jones Falls was spectacular and, at one point, took us through a very narrow cut with a current so brisk that many of us were wondering whether or not we would be able to make it back upstream. I haven't had

the pleasure of seeing much of the Rideau, but I'll bet that Jones Falls is one of the prettiest places along the way. The locks are a triple chamber flight lock with the highest lift in the system. We were sternly warned not to lock through to the bottom or we would disappear into an abyss and never be heard from again.

Ample docking at the top and a beautiful park setting made this the perfect stop for lunch. Walking through the park to the village below took us over to the raging Jones Falls. Looking down at the roiling water and hearing the tremendous roar made one's grip on the handrail just a little tighter. The rumours of great ice cream in the village were true. A nice little country gift shop cum restaurant cum ice cream parlour dished up the goodies to all who came.

The trek back to our boats took us to the other side of the canal to an authentic working blacksmith's shop. This blacksmith produces all of the hand-forged iron fittings and hardware that maintain the locks up and down the system. It was fascinating to listen to and watch the smithy heat the metal to a cherry red in his forge, then hammer, bend, and twist it into a variety of shapes with a skilled hand and remarkable ease. The artifacts he produced were available for purchase or he would custom make your request while you waited.

We all made it back to The Opinicon with minimal breakdowns and tows. Boats secured, it was time for what is becoming a world class wine and cheese event with an interesting and diverse selection of cheeses and wines. We went on to sample them all and have a great time. Absolutely fabulous!

After an excellent dinner came the main event, the semi annual auction. The quality and selection of stuff and junque this year was high grade all the way. There were books, beautiful prints, pictures, paddles, and parts. There were tasty things like maple surple and whiskey, and strange things like old military signal lights (somebody actually bought them).

The job of auctioneering was performed in a grand manner and kept us laughing and bidding the evening through. Not all bidders were buyers, and not all buyers were bidders either! The more we laughed the more we bid. After the last item was sold and the laughter subsided we tallied the loot. The club realized a net profit of \$1,206. What a great bunch of folks!

Sunday morning just a little gray but kinda nice. A hearty breakfast and off for a free-for-all toot around the very pretty Opinicon Lake. Back around noon for the group photo, lunch, the awards, and distribution of the plaques. Then, a time that seems to come all too quickly at these regattas, farewell, safe journey.

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## Running Rigging

Efficient setting of a gunter or a gaff mainsail demands the use of a two halliards system. The throat halliard has a two-part purchase, as outlined in the previous chapter. This enables a tight luff to be achieved. A little slack in the luff lacing at the throat allows the halliard to give a tight luff right along the yard to the peak by pushing the yard up tight.

The proper way to set up a gunter sail is to hoist the sail with the yard more or less horizontal until the luff is fairly tight. Then pull up the peak into the right attitude. Swig up the throat halliard very tight and belay and finally set the peak. The Turk's head on the span forms a stopper about a third of the way from the jaws end and permits a fair lead for the peak halliard. Otherwise, the span shackle would pull hard up towards the mast and make for heavy hauling. Alternatively lash the span tight against the yard with two or three turns of small line. This is also beneficial if the span is so slack as to make the peaking up of the sail impossible.

It is one of the advantages of the gaff or gunter rig that the sail can be lowered when the craft is not luffed up head to wind. It is advisable to employ twin topping lifts in order to control the yard when lowering. They may be rigged as one continuous line from the masthead to a block at the end of the boom, back up to a block at the masthead, and then down to a cleat. However, I found it better to use two separate lifts, from the boom end, up to small cheek blocks on either side of the mast, and down to small cleats on the gunwales just aft of the shrouds, one each side. If the topping lifts are made from good line of at least 1/4" diameter they may very well serve as spare halliards in an emergency.

The need for twin lifts is that they gather up the sail when lowering and prevent it from going into the sea. This particular attribute may be usefully improved by the addition of a lazyjack passing under the boom and making fast to the lifts about halfway up each. A boat rigged as described might seem to use a lot of line, but each piece has a useful role, and makes for efficiency in sailing.

A boat need not be a mess of ironwork. It is better, and cheaper, to use a hitch or tie instead of a shackle for many purposes, such as halliard to jib. The mainsheet warrants care and thought in its arrangement. The mainsail of the Oyster is 113sf and a two-part purchase is sufficient for winds up to F3, but when the wind gets up to F4 or more then 3:1 is more comfortable. This can be arranged by the use of a double-ended mainsheet. From a cleat on one side of the cockpit area the sheet passes round a block on the quarter, up to a becketed block at the end of the boom, down to the other quarter block, and then the tail, finally to hand or a cleat. This gives the 2:1 purchase. When the wind gets up the shorter end is removed from the cleat and made fast to the becket on the boom end block, using a buntline hitch or any other suitable knot or tie, thus giving a 3:1 advantage.

The foresail, too, must be set with a tight luff for efficient sailing on the wind. A good way of using a 3:1 halliard purchase obviates the need for a tack downhaul. The end of the halliard is hitched to the head of the jib, or perhaps the upper swivel of the furling gear, and passed round the block at the masthead, then down to about a foot from the cleat or belaying pin, where it is attached to the top

## Budget Sailing For the Impecunious

### Part 2

By Alvan Eames

of a small becketed block. From the becket a length of a lighter line comes down to hand. The tail is passed round the belaying pin, or cleat, back through the block, hauled down, and made fast.

It will be apparent that a snatch block would be the more elegant method, but any small block could be used by having the length of the tail passed round the sheave, pulled tight and then, when hauled down, the loop is passed round the belaying pin and hauled up using the tail. There you have it... a 3:1 purchase, which on my boat is sufficient to bend the mast.

It is not necessary to use a shackle for attaching the sheets to the clew of the jib. A cheaper, lighter, and possibly less painful way is to make up a short line of small stuff with a Turk's head at one end and a spliced loop at the other. This is hitched to the middle of the rope used for the jib sheets. The loop is passed through the eye in the clew of the sail and is secured by putting the Turk's head through the loop. If the lengths are carefully arranged, no amount of flogging can dislodge it and it is instantly put on or taken off. It is also kinder to the crew when it strikes the side of the head.

The jibsheet fairleads are mounted about a foot inboard on my Oyster. Many tubby cruisers have their fairleads far too far from the centre line for sailing close to the wind. All my halliards are made fast to belaying pins through the mast thwart. They are spaced out fairly well so that they provide extra stay-ing for the mast.

A tallow box is a good thing to have on any boat. Mine is made of wood and it is in constant use for the greasing of shackle pins and dressing the leather lining of the gaff jaws.

It is not necessary to buy expensive blocks made of stainless steel or plastic, etc., when common unstrapped wooden blocks are available. I used to buy ex-WD blocks from a firm called Thomas Foulkes at a very cheap price, by the dozen, and strops are very easily made up.

To make a strop you will need a piece of rope that will fit nicely in the groove of the block and about three-and-a-half times the length needed to go round the block and the thimble. One thimble is needed for an ordinary block and two for a becketed one. Unlay the rope into its three separate strands and, taking one of the strands, tie a simple overhand knot and pull it tight to about the size desired. If the kinks in the rope cause the knot to lie tidily in the grooves, then all is well. If it will not pull down tidily (tiddly), then undo it and retie it the other way.

Then, having pulled the loop down to the right size, you simply take one end of the piece and lay it up back into the lay until only an inch or so is left, and then do the same with the other end. All that remains is to tuck the ends in, as on a simple splice as neatly as possible, put the rope ring onto the block, add the thimble(s), and a tight whipping is clapped on. This is a very satisfying task and is much better than watching television. A stropped

block with a long tail is every bit as effective as an expensive swivel block for many applications on a boat.

A similar method may be used to put an eyesplice into a rope. Unlay one strand only to the desired length and, taking the single strand in one hand and the double in the other, tie a simple overhand knot, right over left, and pull down to the required size. Then lay up first the single strand, and then the double, until the eye is completed. The tails are tucked in the usual manner. And I would wager that the finished job is less likely to pull out than an ordinary eye splice.

The Dutch, in general, are very able seamen and it is said that they can sometimes be considered a trifle parsimonious. That is perhaps unfair, but one of their ploys deserves a mention. To splice an eye in a rope necessarily uses (wastes) a bit of length. The Dutch use a simple tuck splice that does not involve unlaying the rope at all. It is easily and quickly made, very secure, and readily undone to leave the rope at the original length. The rope is looped round to the wanted size, either a soft loop or round a thimble, and the tail is tucked under one strand, then a second, and then a third. All different strands, of course, with each tuck a short distance from the next. Perhaps a fourth tuck would be desirable with hard synthetic rope.

As a matter of interest I put a common splice into one end of a 6' piece of polypropylene line and a Dutch splice into the other. I then fastened one end to an immovable object and the other to the towbar of a Land Rover and tested it to destruction. The common splice pulled out after the line stretched to twice the length.

My tiller is made from the shaft of a large felling axe, which is quite shapely and is made from ash wood. I cut a large notch in the forward end of it, which enables a length of shock cord, loosely rigged between the two quarter knees, to be hauled out and dropped into the notch, thus holding the helm steady. Useful when sailing single-handed.

To assist in rope splicing, a hollow fid is very useful and I have also made use of an old gadget which was originally made for carpet pegging. It is a wood handle with a spike at the end and a trigger which opens a jaw. The effect is rather like a pair of long-jawed pliers with a spring to keep the jaws closed. They were in common use in the early part of the last century, in the North of England, where I live.

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The staysail catboat Corsair 24 was built by the CS Boatworks of Naples, Florida, as the prototype of a proposed one design day sailing and racing class. The class did not "take" or spread, probably because it looked too "different" and most people are wary, with reason, of buying into an unestablished class. The flat bottom may have been against her, though her hull looks remarkably like the current America's Cup racers going on for 20 years after her time (they look even more like the Star Class hull of 1911).

There was also not very aggressive promotion, the "father of the class," some individual who is enthusiastic and takes it upon himself (or herself) to devote serious time to gaining adherents, did not appear. By all accounts the boat was a very fine example of her type, fast, docile, and sweet handling.

The hull is a straightforward sharpie except for the reversed transom introduced to avoid the boxy appearance of a plumb or aft raked transom in a hull of this type. She was given enough profile rocker in her bottom to float on a short waterline for maneuverability, small wetted surface for good drifting performance, and minimal chine eddies. The profile of the after bottom is at a gentle enough angle to allow her to exceed "displacement" speed. The trials were before GPS, but a handheld "speed stick" frequently

## Bolger on Design Staysail Cat

### Design #467

Length 23'6"  
 Breadth 5'10"  
 Draft 3'4"  
 Sail area 207sf  
 Displacement 1270 lbs.  
 Ballast 390 lbs.

showed well above the seven knot top of its register on all points of sailing. As the photos show, she uses all of her bottom length much of the time and she was reported to have extremely nice manners at all times and circumstances, if you can tolerate the limitations of 40" draft.

As for the unusual rig, it has numerous advantages. It is controlled by a single sheet that requires only moderate force and no complications. This prototype was given a sheet traveller, I suppose by reflex, but with the wishbone boom this is unnecessary. Tacking is a matter of putting the tiller over, period.

The sail's luff is completely clear of any spar interference and its raking luff tends to lift the boat as it drives. This sail, in theory, develops more drive than any conventional sail of equal heeling force; that is, that the boat can carry in a given strength of wind.

The aft stepped mast and its rigging makes her ride steadily to an anchor and holds her bow up to the wind when hove to under bare pole in an overpowering squall, the next best thing to being able to get the mast down flat on deck. The single halyard and the single sheet are both within handy reach of the helmsman without being in his way. A knowledgeable critic remarked that, "Her greatest virtue seems to be the blessing of high performance without the curse of hard work."

The disadvantages are; the sail tends to center itself quite strongly, and running before the wind in a light breeze it has to be held out with a whisker pole to drive well if tacking down wind is not practical for some reason. It develops lee helm when reefed as the sail runs forward as it comes down its stay (I've toyed with the idea of setting a small mizzen sail on the lower leg of the topmast backstay, but this is not quite as simple as it looks at first glance, though it would look quite neat). The rig requires a tall mast and it must be very rigidly stayed, with heavy stress on rigging components and on the hull (not hard to cater to these days, but rather expensive).

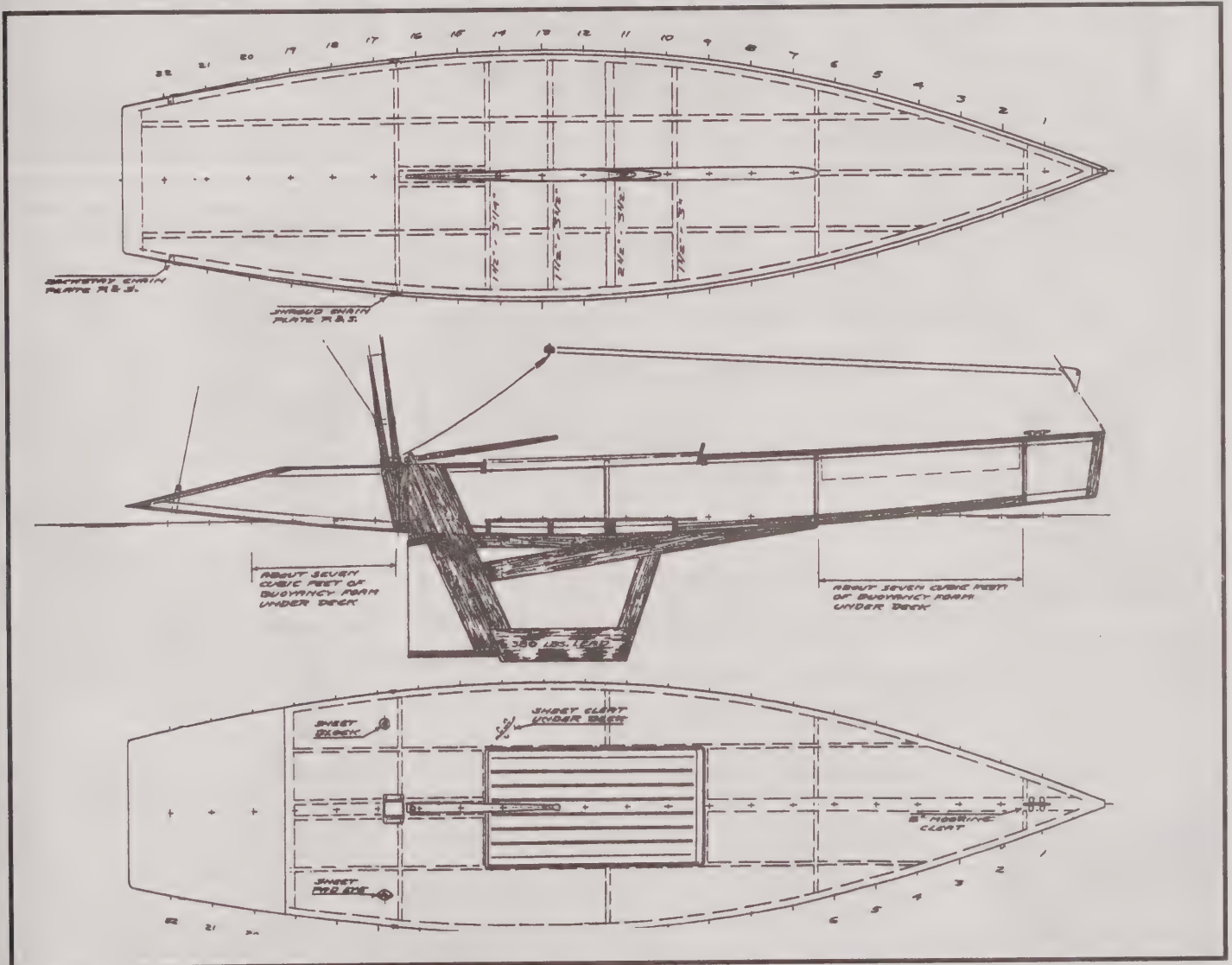
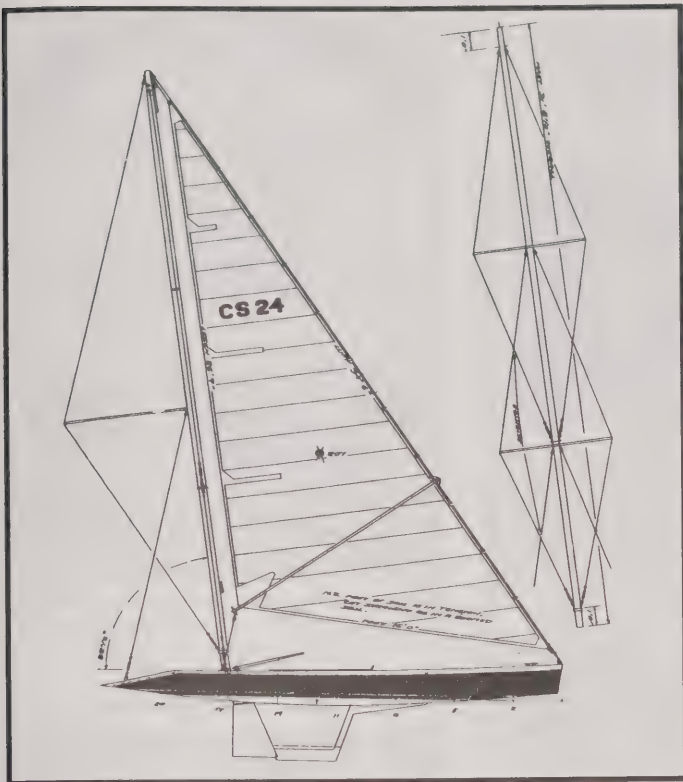
A drawback that should have been expected, but wasn't, is that while the rig is very easy and comfortable to sail in the ordinary way, it calls for great skill and intense concentration to exploit the perfect airfoil its clear luff allows. The luff of the sail must be kept at the exact angle of the apparent or relative wind, or it will "stall" (develop eddies in the flow on the lee side). This is not possible in an airplane or glider wing, which has to use a much rounded leading edge. In a sail it can be done and the effect is dramatic, but it is not easy, even with luff tufting, to give warning and does not happen often with a helmsman who wants to watch rivals or the scenery. For such a sailor, a conventional cat with the same mast height is actually faster much of the time, largely because more sail can be set on the given mast or on a given peak height in a gaff rigger.

For the level of performance, including with casual handling, this is a very simple boat to build one off and does not give away much style in achieving the simplicity.

Plans of the Corsair 24, our Design #467, are available for \$150 to build one boat, sent priority mail, rolled in a tube, from Phil Bolger & Friends, Inc. P.O. Box 1209, Gloucester, MA 01930. The plans are quite detailed, on seven 17" x 22" sheets, including detailed drawings for a wooden box mast and its tang fittings (the prototype used a stock aluminum mast).









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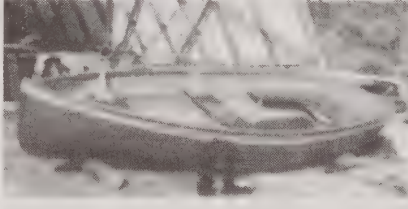
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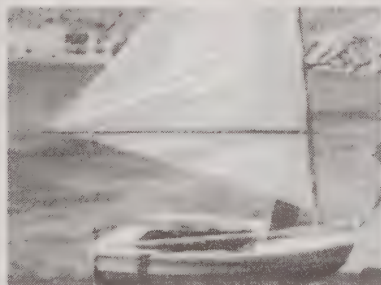
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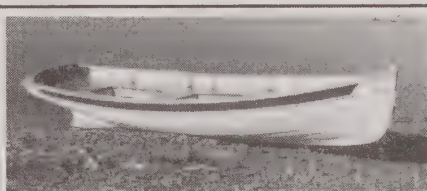


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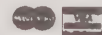


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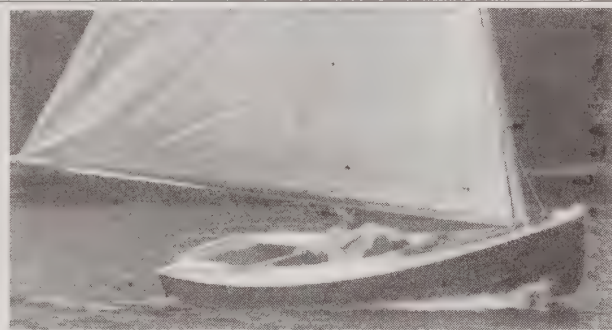


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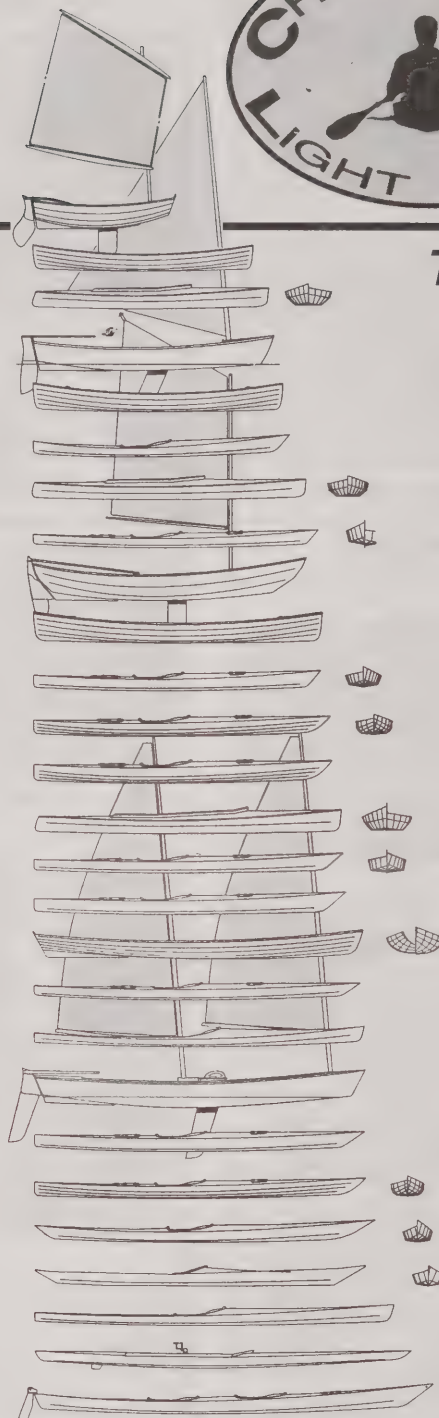
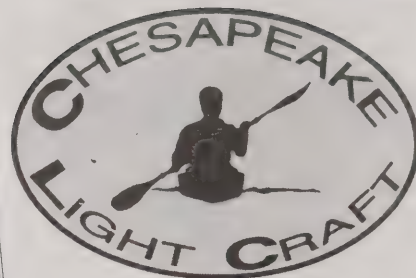
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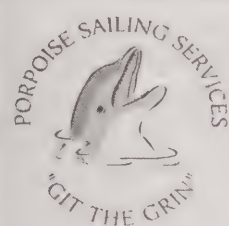


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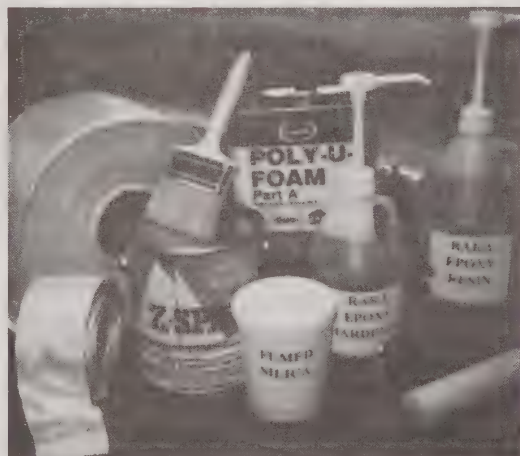
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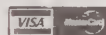


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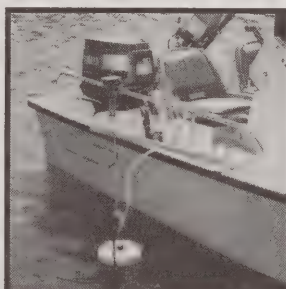
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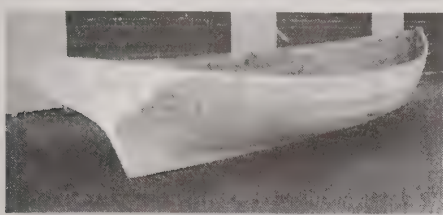
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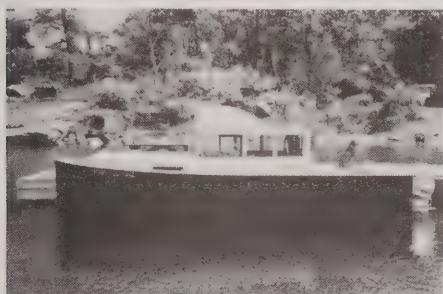


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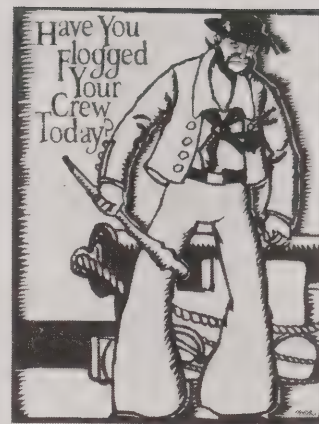
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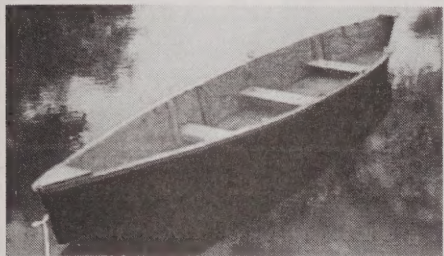
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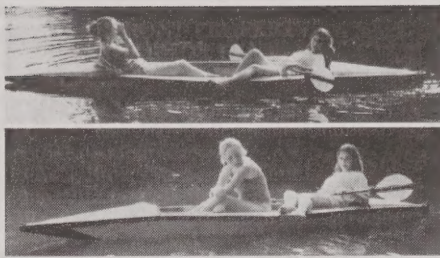
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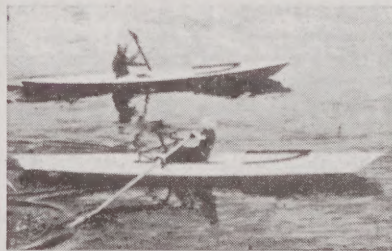
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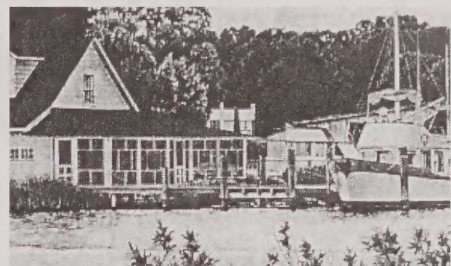
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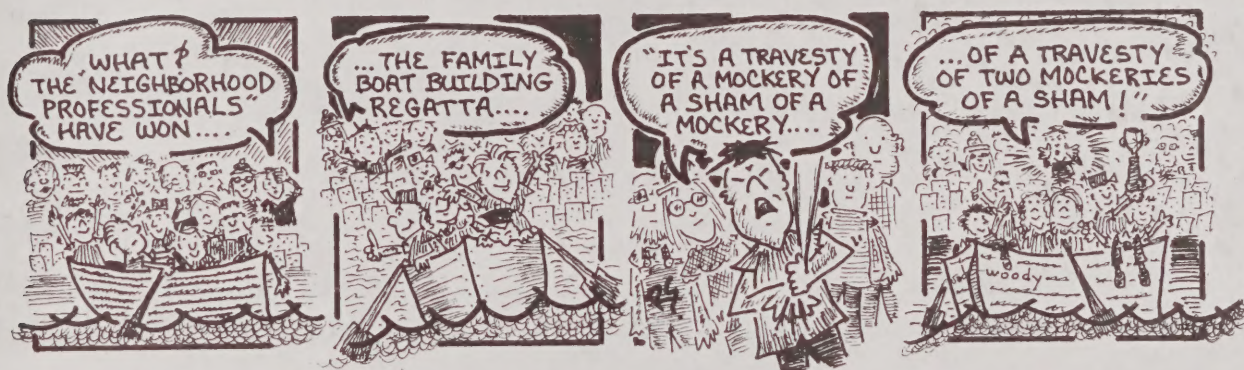
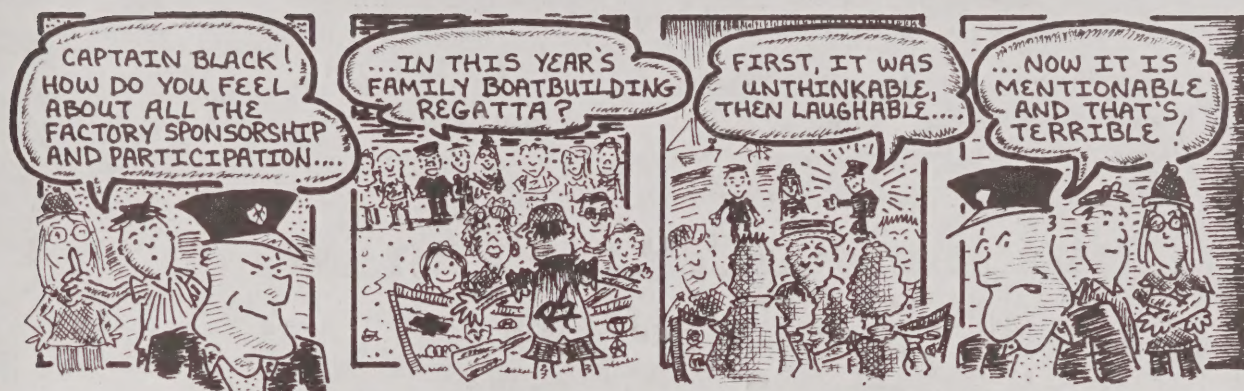




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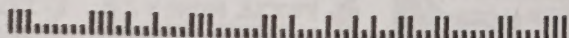
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